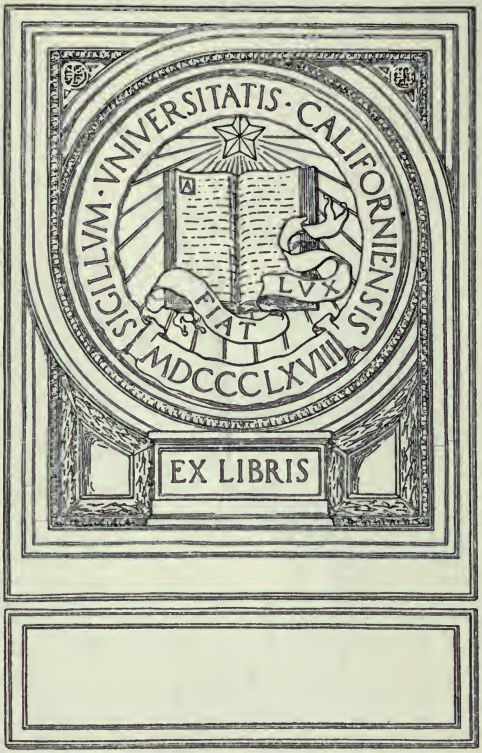
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Writing for the Magazines

BY

J. BERG ESENWEIN, F. R. S. A.

EDITOR OF "THE WRITER'S MONTHLY," SOMETIME EDITOR OF LIPPINCOTT'S MAGAZINE, AND FORMER DIRECTOR IN THE PERIODICAL PUBLISHERS' ASSOCIATION OF AMERICA

THE WRITER'S LIBRARY

EDITED BY J. BERG ESENWEIN

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To the Memory of

HAROLD

Long Loved—and Lost a While

This Little Book is Dedicated

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Why This Book?

A FOREWORD

The population of the United States consists of one hundred millions, most of whom seem to be ambitious to write. I would not willingly add to this host, yet to those who have some prospect of success I should like to extend a hand of help.

Of the countless would-be writers, by far the greater number fail because they have nothing to say; for them there is no course but to fill up their lives with things worth while. A much smaller number do not succeed because, though they know various things that would be of service and interest to their fellows, they take up their pens blindly—they know little of the forms acceptable to the magazines, and less of how to learn how. All such need a guide.

In this volume may be found analyses of the various kinds of material that editors are constantly buying, together with such examples as could be included in a work of this size. The several tables showing the favorite lengths of magazine material and the themes most in vogue, are all authoritative, having been made up from first-hand information contributed for this work by the editors of our most broadly-read magazines, and from a careful examination of hundreds of issues covering a wide range of current periodicals. If these tables are studied in connection with such magazines as may be available to the ambitious writer they should prove valuable guides.

Material of this sort appears never to have been published before.

No attempt has been made to evolve a set technique for any of the various forms of magazine material herein treated—the effort has been to set down clearly and accurately the results of long experience, and such discriminating observation as the author possesses, leaving each reader to choose the materials and the methods best suited to his own resources and preferences. In other words, the advice on questions of theme, treatment, form and marketing is intended to be suggestive and not arbitrary, and it is particularly hoped that in the several digests of principles of the various prose, dramatic and verse forms treated, the growing guild of pen-workers will find many helps which will save time and labor, and the disappointment which is inevitably consequent upon unguided or misdirected effort.

The magazines today use an amazing amount of material, and those who are chosen to furnish it are they who make an intelligent and persistent study of what is called for, how it is conceived and worked out, and how and where it is offered for sale. Magazine writing, it must constantly be reiterated, is both an art and a craft. This volume is offered in a friendly spirit to all writers who need help in either the one or the other phase of authorship.

J. Berg Esenwein.

Springfield, Mass.,
July 1, 1916.

SUGGESTIONS TO TEACHERS AND STUDENTS OF JOURNALISM AND ENGLISH

Like several other volumes in THE WRITER'S LIBRARY, this book covers a subject not heretofore treated, except in a fragmentary way, by any other author. It will be found impressive in grasp and peculiarly practical in method. Every line is written with the authority of experience and a deep-seated wish to help.

It is believed that the progressive arrangement of the chapters will make this as ideal a textbook as the other volumes in the author's series have proved to be throughout the United States, Canada and England. No student, and certainly no teacher, would plan for a complete course in every type of magazine writing, based on a single text, so it is suggested that at the outstart a progressive study be taken up, leading from the shorter to the longer prose forms. Those students who show aptitude for verse, fiction or dramatics should then choose their favorite of these three literary types and devote to it as much time as may be available. More complete treatises on the short-story, poetics and versification, and play writing are already available, either from the pen of, or edited by, Dr. Esenwein, and done in the same spirit that informs this volume, so that there is plenty of help for those who are able to go beyond the simpler prose forms of magazine writing.

Particular attention is called to the valuable tables contained in this book. Students should be encouraged

to follow these and similar lines in personal intensive research—the results will be illuminating. Let the student supplement the notes of the text by going directly to the magazines, great and small.

The large number and wide variety of questions and exercises appended to most of the chapters are so arranged that either a student-writer who is working alone or a teacher who is directing a class may find it easy to select questions perfectly adapted to individual needs. It is not suggested that all the questions be used. Nor should all questions be made the basis for written work—a number of thought-provoking queries have been added for either meditation or impromptu class work.

The most practical teaching of journalism, obviously, is that which leads to publication, though it is equally obvious that not all pupils in their student days will attain this result. This book offers the first and only solution of this difficult problem by definitely showing the pupil at the very outstart how easy it is to get into the magazines in a small way if one will only follow instruction. The small markets, and even the large markets for small items, are wide open. It would seem to be a helpful adjunct to teaching to encourage the pupil to enter, though with no more than a paragraph in his hand.

THE PUBLISHERS.

WRITING FOR THE MAGAZINES

CHAPTER I

THE MAGAZINE AND THE NEWSPAPER

Since the first requisite for writing successfully for a given periodical is to grasp its nature, aims and limitations, it seems necessary at the outstart to make two inquiries: What is the history of the magazine, and what, precisely, is its nature, as a distinct literary product?

1. *Origin of the Magazine*

Regarding the origin of the magazine, doctors do not agree. It grew out of the newspaper, but just how different from the newspaper must a new periodical be before it may fairly be called a new literary form? Yet if we take into account the purpose and character of this innovation, it would seem easy enough to determine when the magazine became a thing of individuality, even though it long continued to purvey news to the public. Today, some magazines make a specialty of news—always, however, in the form of a summary, or digest, printed in addition to real literary matter. Doubtless magazines and newspapers will always continue to cross each other's domains at certain points.

In January, 1665, at Paris, Denis de Sallo, under the assumed name of the Sieur de Hedonville, first brought out the *Journal des Savants*, which— since both in purpose and in contents it forecasted the modern periodical— we may

accept as the earliest of the magazines. Three years later, 1668, the *Giornale de' letterati* was issued in Rome. In 1681 *Weekly Memorials for the Ingenious* was published in London. And in 1688 the Germans began a series of monthly periodicals under the general name of *Monatsgesprache*, which spread so rapidly in popularity that soon nearly every important German city had its own magazine, generally local in interest. All these periodicals showed marks of essential difference from the newspapers which had preceded them, so that within a period of twenty-three years the magazine as a new form was founded, if not established, in four great lands, though it was not until the eighteenth century that other countries imitated these originators. It is, however, with the history of the magazine in English that we are now concerned, and that only most briefly.

When on May 21, 1709, appeared Joseph Addison's first contribution to *The Tattler*, which had been founded by Richard Steele, a new era of journalism dawned for the English-speaking world. Only seventeen tri-weekly issues had preceded this epochal number, and into each the ingenious Steele had put something of that literary quality which for so long was the essence of the true magazine. It was in *The Tattler* that Addison and Steele first printed their Essays —half fiction, half what they were named, and altogether delightful—and continued them in *The Spectator* which, as a daily, succeeded *The Tattler*. This fecund partnership was maintained down to the final issue of a third magazine, *The Guardian*, which disappeared in October, 1713.

In 1731, Edward Cave started *The Gentleman's Magazine*

or Monthly Intelligencer, for which in 1740 Samuel Johnson became the parliamentary reporter, often writing the speeches in a style which astounded—not to say flattered—many law-making gentlemen who were innocent of such magniloquent periods. The preface to the first volume states that the editor's object was "to give Monthly a View of all the Pieces of Wit, Humour, or Intelligence, daily offer'd to the Public in the News-Papers," and "to join therewith some other Matters of Use or Amusement that will be communicated to us." In addition to this he professed to record the "most *remarkable Transactions* and *Events*, Foreign and Domestick," "the Births, Marriages, Deaths, Promotions, and Bankrupts," together with "Prices of Goods and Stock," "Bills of Mortality," and "a Register of Books."

American magazine journalism made early contribution to the new movement. In 1741—nine years, be it noted, before Dr. Samuel Johnson founded in London the ponderous *Rambler*, and seventeen years before the same pundit established *The Idler*—Benjamin Franklin issued in Philadelphia the *General Magazine and Historical Chronicle*. It did not show all the marks of Dr. Franklin's later ability and lived but six months. In the same year, 1741, Webbe founded the *American Magazine*, which was still less successful than Franklin's venture. In Boston, in 1743, *The American Magazine and Historical Chronicle*—which it will be noticed assumed a name compounded from those of its American predecessors—began a short life. In fact, for a long period American magazines shared with their English precursors the quality of being short-lived, until

in 1815 was founded *The North American Review*, which flourished, and has now entered upon the second century of an honored life.

2. *What is the Modern Magazine And How Does it Differ Typically from the Newspaper?*

To define is to limit, and when we begin to limit we must go carefully. We all know the sort of thing we mean by a newspaper, even with its magazine features, but though we readily recognize a magazine when we see one, it is not so easy to set up a definition of a magazine, unless—as we shall have to do—we make a very broad generalization.

We have seen that in its earlier days the limits of the magazine were narrow as compared with its present scope. When it came to its typical form, it was everywhere recognized as *a literary miscellany*, yet nowadays most magazines cannot be said to be literary, and the contents of the larger number, though not the most prominently before the public, are so highly specialized as to be far from a miscellany. So the magazine has changed and bids fair to change still more.

Even the slightest acquaintance with the periodicals named in the foregoing historical outline, added to a knowledge of present-day magazines, will show that one thing a magazine is not: it is not merely a newspaper. True, magazines like *The Outlook* and *The Independent* (weeklies) do contain, in addition to literary and other miscellany, a considerable body of news, but news treated in a highly specialized way: their province in those departments is not primarily to report but to interpret news.

Again, periodicals like *The Literary Digest* (weekly), *Current Opinion*, and *The Review of Reviews* (monthlies) are made up not so much of news as of digests of editorial opinions, reviews of current events, salient passages from newspaper and magazine articles, comment on things of present literary and artistic interest, and all things significant in the industrial, commercial, political, economic, ethical, religious, intellectual and recreational life of the day. Such entirely original articles as they print are on themes growing out of the foregoing interests. Any departures from this broad program are incidental and not typical.

It is perhaps stretching the meaning of the term news, as applied to the newspaper, to extend it to information of what is going on in the world of engineering, music, medicine, or any other limited field, as printed regularly in certain magazines. Doubtless enough has been said to establish this broad distinction: News is primarily the business of the newspapers; the interpretation of news has become the function of a certain well-marked kind of magazine.

(a) *A magazine is a periodical*—that is, it is issued at stated intervals, longer than one day. The fact that some newspapers are published two or three times a week, and still others weekly, would not justify their being classed as periodicals—usage has reserved the name for magazines.

(b) *A magazine is a definitely specialized publication*, whereas the average newspaper is such in only a remote sense. *The Wall Street Journal* (morning and evening, six days a week) is a *financial* newspaper and therefore highly

specialized, and a few other dailies here and there are equally so. In each of these, the general news features are subordinated to the special purpose of the publication, thus putting such papers in unique classes—therefore they will not serve as general standards. Of course, also, most dailies specialize in the news of their own cities, and in a lesser degree many great newspapers are specialized in the sense that their policies and hence their contents are molded to fit the real or supposed demands of a certain part of a territorial public. *The Boston Transcript* is not read generally by the same public that supports *The Boston American,* any more than *The New York Evening World* would regularly satisfy the readers of *The New York Evening Post.*

But in a different sense from the foregoing a magazine is definitely specialized. It does, of course, aim to interest the general public and in a few instances succeeds to the extent that upwards of two million copies of each of several magazines are sold monthly; still, the most popular of these magazines limits its appeal not at all to a locality, and scarcely at all to a class of readers, but almost entirely to certain sides of human nature everywhere, as we shall see presently. It is therefore in its table of contents broadly similar month after month, and hence patterned to fit a highly specialized conception of what people want, that the magazine differs from the newspapers. In other words, the magazine specializes in certain definite interests, which it aims to satisfy better than any other publication.

(c) *Greater permanency* enters into the idea of a magazine than is the case with the newspapers. Rarely is this

permanency absolute nowadays, as when our fathers religiously saved and bound the numbers of "their" magazine, still, a much greater permanency is attained than is aimed at by the daily paper. True, not a few newspapers are better worth preserving than many magazines, yet in even the more ephemeral weekly and monthly periodicals may be found serialized novels, short-stories and essays which eventually make their way into the realm of real or so-called literature. This used also to be true of the newspaper page, but now for the most part the fiction appearing there is reprinted from magazines and books, usually by arrangement with some syndicate.

(d) *The magazine is aimed at a mood of leisure*, while the newspaper is to be read rapidly, so far as it does not enter the field of the magazine. For this reason the well-conducted magazine is prepared to satisfy a more critical eye, both in form and in matter, than is any but the very exceptional newspaper. Its fiction is longer, or comes in longer installments, its articles are more thoroughgoing, its whole appearance and contents more sustained and finished.

This leads to the final distinction which we shall venture, though still others, of less obviousness, might be suggested:

(e) *The form of the magazine is distinctive.* This is not merely a matter of custom but grows out of several of the discriminations which have just been attempted—as will need no further discussion.

In defining the magazine, then, only general characteristics may be named, not only because magazines differ so

widely in general but for the reason already mentioned that of late years so many magazine features have been made a regular part of the daily paper and, by the same token, so many newspaper characteristics have crept into the magazines.

A magazine is a periodical publication, primarily bound in paper, specialized in both its characteristic and miscellaneous contents so as to satisfy certain definite interests, and designed for a mood of comparative leisure.

It will be interesting to note how these characteristics of the magazine are approached, and sometimes met, by special numbers, or sections, of the daily paper, as the Sunday edition. Not only such syndicated publications as *Every Week*, and others similar, but the "magazine page" of the daily issue, imitate the typical magazine in contents, if not in appearance. The writer for the magazines cannot afford to overlook this tremendous market for his pen-work even though much of the field is covered by syndicate arrangement.

CHAPTER II

KINDS OF MAGAZINES

It could arouse little more than an academic interest to present a classification of magazines even measurably exact in its grouping or fully inclusive in scope. It must be understood that nothing of the sort is intended by this chapter. Magazines come and go, merge and change, with such bewildering suddenness that even the following short list is sure to be misrepresentative in at least some details by the time it is put into type. The real purpose of this list is to arouse an interest in the little-known magazines as markets for material, and thereby to show intending contributors that, as multifarious as are human pursuits, so widely diversified are the periodicals meant to match them.

Several further words of caution are necessary. It has not been possible to compile a representative list of periodicals covering so broad a range of interests and yet include only such as both accept and pay for contributed material. For this reason the accompanying survey *must not* be regarded as a list of markets. Before sending material to those magazines which are evidently either of small circulation or highly specialized in character it would be well to examine one or two copies, or else ask the editor briefly if unsolicited material is desired, and paid for if available. A stamped, addressed return envelope usually brings reply. Further, you must remember that many

magazines are physically little more than a few stitched leaves, so do not be misled into expecting too much from the unknown.

It will be noticed that only one periodical is named as an example of each kind. This implies no judgment on my part that that magazine is of better grade than others not mentioned. Each is listed arbitrarily and solely as an example of a class. Had I found it possible to study carefully each of the periodicals published in the interest of—let us say for instance—manufactures and trades, and also all the magazines of every other class, the total selection doubtless would have been more representative—though not more permanently useful, in view of the frequent changes in magazinedom.

Finally, it must be obvious that most magazines use material outside the scope indicated by their names. Therefore I say again, see as many copies of as many kinds of magazines as you can. Somewhere, in a surprising number of those magazines that buy material at all, will be found the sort of thing you yourself are able to write—if you are a flexible writer and willing to begin in a small way

VARIOUS TYPES OF MAGAZINES

Note that some of the following magazines touch interests not indicated in the broad classifications—for example, a recreation periodical may include the business side of recreation. The periodicals are published monthly unless otherwise indicated.

Miscellanies

LITERARY: *Atlantic Monthly*, Boston, Mass.

POPULAR: *Munsey*, New York

LITERARY AND CURRENT EVENTS: *Outlook* (weekly), New York

POPULAR AND CURRENT EVENTS: *Collier's* (weekly), New York

POPULAR INFORMATION: *Popular Science Monthly*, New York

Reviews

GENERAL: *North American Review*, New York

GENERAL, AND INTERPRETATIONS OF CURRENT AFFAIRS: *Current Opinion*, New York

DIGESTS OF NEWSPAPERS AND PERIODICALS: *Literary Digest* (weekly), New York

SPECIALIZED: *Manhattan Review*, New York

(See also other headings.)

Literary

GENERAL: *Bookman*, New York

SPECIAL FORMS: *Poetry Journal*, Boston, Mass.

WRITERS IN GENERAL: *Writer's Monthly*, Springfield, Mass.

SPECIAL FORMS OF AUTHORSHIP: *The Dramatist*, Easton, Pa.

LIBRARIES: *Public Libraries*, Chicago

COMMERCIAL: *Publisher and Retailer*, New York

Fiction

Ainslee's, New York

Humor and Satire

Life, New York

Art

GENERAL: *International Studio*, New York
EDUCATIONAL: *School Arts Book*, Boston, Mass.
SPECIAL FORMS: *Keramic Studio*, Syracuse, N. Y.

Music

GENERAL: *Etude*, Philadelphia
TRADES: *Music Trades* (weekly), New York
SPECIAL FORMS: *Piano Magazine*, Chicago

Education

REPRESENTING PARTICULAR SCHOOLS: *Princeton Pictorial Review* (fortnightly), Princeton, N. J.
GENERAL: *American Education*, Albany, N. Y.
ADMINISTRATION: *American School Board Journal*, Milwaukee, Wis.
PARTICULARIZED PRINCIPLES: *Journal of Educational Psychology*, Baltimore, Md.
SPECIAL GRADES: *American Primary Teacher*, Boston, Mass.
VOCATIONAL: *Manual Training Magazine*, Peoria, Ill.
SPECIAL BRANCHES: *Modern Language Notes*, Baltimore, Md.
SECTIONAL: *Pennsylvania School Journal*, Lancaster, Pa.
DENOMINATIONAL: *Catholic School Journal*, Milwaukee, Wis.

Professional and Technical

REVIEWS: *Engineering Review*, New York

GENERAL: *Army and Navy Journal* (weekly), New York
SPECIALTIES: *Journal of Nervous and Mental Diseases*, New York
PARTICULAR SCHOOLS: *Osteopathic Physician*, Chicago

Vocations

NURSING: *Trained Nurse and Hospital Review*, New York

Avocations

AMATEUR PHOTOGRAPHY: *Amateur Photographer's Weekly*, Cleveland, Ohio

Farming and Allied Occupations

GENERAL: *Country Gentleman*, Philadelphia
PARTICULAR FORMS: *American Fruits*, Rochester, N. Y.
SPECIAL CROPS: *Modern Sugar Planter* (weekly), New Orleans, La.
FLORICULTURE: *Florists' Exchange*, New York
STOCK RAISING, GENERAL: *Breeders' Gazette*, Chicago
STOCK RAISING, SPECIAL: *American Sheep Breeder and Grower*, New York
POULTRY: *American Poultry Journal*, Chicago
PIGEONS: *Pigeon News* (semi-monthly), Boston, Mass.
BEES: *Gleanings in Bee Culture* (semi-monthly), Medina, Ohio
DAIRY: *Hoard's Dairyman* (weekly), Ft. Atkinson, Wis.
IRRIGATION: *Irrigation Age*, Chicago
FORESTRY: *American Forestry*, Washington, D. C.

Manufactures and Trades

GENERAL: *Manufacturers' Record*, Baltimore, Md.

SPECIAL LINE: *Acetylene Journal*, Chicago

PARTICULAR BRANCH OF A SPECIAL LINE: *Accessory and Garage Journal* (semi-monthly), Pawtucket, R. I.

Commerce

THE GENERAL FIELD: *World's Work*, New York

CORPORATION: *International Railway Journal*, Philadelphia

EXPORTING: *American Exporter*, New York

WHOLESALING: *Rock Products and Building Material*, Chicago

RETAILING: *Hardware Dealers' Magazine*, New York

SALESMANSHIP: *Salesman*, San Francisco

SPECIAL PHASES OF BUSINESS: *Judicious Advertising*, Chicago

MAIL ORDER: *Agents and Mail Order Dealers Magazine* (bi-monthly), Chicago

COÖPERATION: *Coöperation*, Minneapolis, Minn.

FINANCE: *American Economist* (weekly), New York

HOUSE ORGANS: *Hoggson's Magazine*, New York

METHODS OF EFFICIENCY: *System*, Chicago

Various Occupations

Chef and Steward, Chicago

Health and Recreation

HEALTH: *Good Health*, Battle Creek, Mich.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT: *Physical Culture*, New York

OUTDOOR LIFE AND SPORTS: *Outing*, New York

PARTICULAR OUTDOOR SPORTS: *Baseball Magazine*, New York

HUNTING, FISHING AND FOREST LIFE: *Field and Stream*, New York

MOTORING: *Motor*, New York

BOATING: *The Rudder*, New York

HORSEMANSHIP: *Rider and Driver*, New York

AËRONAUTICS: *Aircraft*, New York

INDOOR GAMES, PHYSICAL: *Bowler's Journal* (weekly), New York

INDOOR GAMES, INTELLECTUAL: *Chess Forum*, New York

INDOOR RECREATIONS: *Philatelic West and Post Card Collector's World*, Superior, Neb.

PETS: *Dogdom*, Battle Creek, Mich.

DRAMA: *Theatre Magazine*, New York

PHOTOPLAY: *Moving Picture World*, New York

LYCEUM: *Lyceum World*, Indianapolis, Ind.

Religious and Ethical

CLERICAL: *Homiletic Review*, New York

POPULAR, UNDENOMINATIONAL: *Christian Herald* (weekly), New York

DENOMINATIONAL: *The Catholic World* (weekly), New York

SPECIAL CAUSES: *Union Signal* (Temperance—W. C. T. U., weekly), Chicago

INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS, MEN: *Association Men* (Y. M. C. A.), New York

INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS, YOUNG PEOPLE, INTERDENOMINATIONAL: *Christian Endeavor World* (Y. P. S. C. E., weekly), Boston, Mass.

YOUNG PEOPLE, DENOMINATIONAL: *Epworth Herald* (Methodist Episcopal, weekly), Chicago

JUVENILE, DENOMINATIONAL: *The Comrade* (Presbyterian, weekly), Philadelphia

JUVENILE, BOYS, UNDENOMINATIONAL: *Boy's World* (weekly), Elgin, Ill.

JUVENILE, GIRLS, UNDENOMINATIONAL: *Girl's Companion* (weekly), Elgin, Ill.

JUVENILE, BOYS, DENOMINATIONAL: *Youth's World* (Baptist, weekly), Philadelphia

JUVENILE, GIRLS, DENOMINATIONAL: *Girl's World* (Baptist, weekly), Philadelphia

Cults, Causes and Organizations

CULTS: New Thought—*Nautilus*, Holyoke, Mass.

SECRET FRATERNITIES: F. and A. M.—*Masonic Home Journal* (semi-monthly), Louisville, Ky.

PHILANTHROPIC: *American Red Cross Magazine*, Washington, D. C.

HUMANITARIAN CAUSES: *Our Dumb Animals* (S. P. C. A.), Boston, Mass.

RESTRICTED CLASSES: *Volta Review* (for the deaf), Washington, D. C.

LABOR, GENERAL: *Trades Union News* (weekly), Philadelphia

LABOR, SPECIAL CLASSES: *United Mine Workers' Journal* (weekly), Indianapolis, Ind.

POLITICAL: Socialism—*The Masses*, New York

NATIONALISTIC: *National Hibernian*, Washington, D. C.

RACIAL: *Red Man*, Carlisle, Pa.

Woman and the Home

GENERAL: *Home and Country*, Cincinnati, Ohio
MOTHERHOOD: *Mother's Magazine*, Elgin, Ill.
HOME MAKING: *Good Housekeeping*, New York
HYGIENE AND SANITATION: *The Healthy Home*, Athol, Mass.
COOKING: *American Cookery*, Boston, Mass.
HOME OCCUPATIONS: *Home Needlework Magazine*, Boston, Mass.
DRESS AND FASHIONS: *Vogue*, New York
BUSINESS: *Business Woman's Magazine*, Newburg, N. Y.
OCCUPATIONS: *Millinery Trade Review*, New York
CLUB LIFE: *American Clubwoman*, New York
POLITICAL LIFE: *The Woman Voter*, New York
COUNTRY LIFE: *Country Life in America*, Garden City, L. I., N. Y.

Youth and Childhood

YOUTH: *St. Nicholas*, New York
BOYS: *American Boy*, Detroit, Mich.
BOYS, SPECIAL FIELD: *Boys' Life* (Boy Scouts' Magazine), New York
SMALL CHILDREN: *Little Folks*, Salem, Mass.
BABIES: *Baby*, Louisville, Ky.

Sectional

THE WEST: *Sunset Magazine*, San Francisco, Cal.
STATE: *Arizona*, Phoenix, Ariz.

Miscellany

PERSONALIA: *Town Topics*, New York

Special Interests

STUDY AND INFORMATION: *Journal of American History* (quarterly), New York

PROPAGANDA: *Liberal Advocate* (anti-prohibition), Columbus, Ohio

MATRIMONIAL: *Cupid's Columns* (bi-monthly), St. Paul, Minn.

GOVERNMENT: *American Municipalities*, Marshalltown, Iowa.

SAVINGS: *American Building Association News*, Cincinnati, Ohio

CHAPTER III

KINDS OF MAGAZINE MATERIAL

In the chapter just preceding, the reason for resolving magazines into their kinds was made clear. The purpose of this short chapter is quite the same—to help the journalist see how wide is his field and to warn him that because it is wide he must shape each particular piece of writing to fill some *special* type of magazine need.

The article that sprawls has but a meagre chance of acceptance. In general magazine matter, much more than in fictional material, the purpose and nature of the composition must be definitely planned beforehand. A school boy may set out to write a composition without having first determined whether it is to be of a definite type, and yet pass the test, for the literary standards of the lower schools cannot be exacting, but not so with the magazine journalist. He must aim, if he would hit the mark at all—to say nothing of scoring a bull's eye.

1. Clear-cut Purpose is Necessary

It does not seem to enter the mind of the average writer that all successful magazine material is highly specialized. Whenever a really good article shows more than one type the author has so planned it. The travel article may be partly fictionized, as Miss Anne Wharton's and Mrs. Maude Howe Elliot's nearly always are, but not because

the author started to write fiction and drifted into place-description, or contrariwise. With the utmost precision the magazine writer must know what he intends to do, what class of readers he purposes reaching, and what means he will use to gain the result.

2. *Knowledge of Varieties is Valuable*

I have used the word "valuable" because I mean that such knowledge has commercial value. To know what varieties of magazine material are used, where they are acceptable, what characteristics mark them, what style of English is typical in those forms, which kinds demand pictures, which do not, and what lengths are popular—these are questions which directly and vitally bear on the marketing of your material, and hence primarily affect its preparation and writing. Much good material is never sold because the writer has overlooked one or more of these considerations. It is futile to expand into a serious essay a point that demands merely one pungent paragraph, just as it is hopeless to try to sell an anecdote that has been padded out into a story. On the subject of studying markets more will be said later.[1]

3. *Listing the Kinds of Magazine Material*

It is but natural for the beginner to limit the variety of his output by overlooking special and even obscure kinds of markets. A carefully kept note-book[2] will prove a

[1] See Chapter XV.
[2] See Chapter IV, page 36.

revelation, not only in opening your eyes to the minute but important differences between one sort of article and another, but in two other ways: in suggesting markets for hitherto unsalable ideas, and in recalling forgotten facts.

In this and succeeding chapters attention is given to the broad types of magazine material, but you should remember that under each are almost countless sub-varieties, one or many of which may open up to you lucrative fields. Make your list of types and sub-types as full as you possibly can.

Here let me repeat that the daily newspaper must not be forgotten when we consider magazine material. As we have seen, many odd corners of the newspapers contain magazine matter, as well as the so-called magazine pages. True, much of this "stuff" is clipped, with or without credit, but all such items originated somewhere, therefore you will find it profitable to hunt out the markets—marketing is a prime essential for the journalist; too much care cannot be given to the study.

4. Versatility is Essential

Most young writers make the mistake of specializing too early—they begin to build their house at the roof-tree.

Upon reflection we shall see that specializing is of two kinds: we may specialize in the sense of limiting our output to a particular kind of writing. Without doubt this leads at last to the highest efficiency, but it is not a safe practice

for the tyro. The other sort of specializing is one of idea. In it the writer narrows his immediate subject to a definite phase of a broad question, and then does the same when he takes up another subject, which is likely to be in an entirely different field. This sort of intensive work in an extensive field furnishes facility, and a broader chance of acceptances —which are the staff of life.

It may be plain, then, that the ability to write with special knowledge on a large variety of interesting subjects is the foundation of journalistic success. It will be time enough for you to limit your thought to one field when you have won a hearing for yourself in many minor ways. There is no harm, and much good, in having a specialty in which you are perfecting yourself all the while you are gaining a variety of outlets for your pen-work; indeed, most successful journalists have followed this course; but it is certainly unwise to neglect the slightest decent chance to get into print. Be alert to open every door, though it lead only to the sale of a jingle, a jest, or the report of a domestic discovery. In this way you will learn where magazine editors hang their keys, and win a sympathetic reading for your larger efforts later.

To be sure, we must all recognize our limitations. It would be folly to insist, for the mere sake of variety, on making ourselves write the sorts of stuff for which we are totally unfitted by equipment, opportunity and interest. There are plenty of openings without committing this absurdity. Let a sense of fitness dictate what types of writing you essay, yet do not hesitate because either the field or the present reward seems negligible.

5. *Devising New Kinds of Material*

The welcome caller is the one who enters an editor's office with a workable new idea. Many chances to one, he will be given an opportunity to demonstrate its merit by submitting at least one finished article. Now and then an editor will suggest an idea for a series of shorter or longer articles to a staff writer, or to some outside writer whose work is known; occasionally he will give an out-and-out assignment to a prominent writer to do one or more articles of a given kind; but really most of the ideas for fresh types of magazine material are brought to the editor by a member of his staff or sent by some outside writer, whether green or seasoned.

It should be obvious that this search for fresh ideas is the gist of journalism. It must be equally plain that with such an idea one's chances of success are largely increased.[1]

Many times an alert journalist will seize upon an idea which has been used once or twice and then discarded. He will expand the idea into a series, submit a few specimens, and receive an order for a given number. Study the variety of material printed everywhere serially by Albert Payson Terhune and Frederic J. Haskin—all is magazine material, in the sense that it is neither news matter nor editorial, and all is evidence of how a single fresh idea, or an old idea popularized, may be submitted with good chances of success if backed by enough ability to present the ideas tersely and readably.

[1] See Chapter XV for suggestions on how to bring ideas to the attention of the editor.

The time-honored injunction of Sir Philip Sydney applies here as elsewhere: "Look in thine heart and write." When you see a thing that interests you it will interest others. But if that were all, we should every one be successful journalists. When the idea lays hold upon you, begin to question yourself. *Questioning is the essence of invention.* Is the idea fresh? No. Who has worked it up before? Oh, many have. Is it quite worked out? Not at all, for one phase of it has been slurred over or overlooked entirely. Very well, there is your chance!

But can that neglected phase of the subject be made interesting enough to swing an article, or even a series? Yes. Will one article be enough to exhaust interest? By no means. Then how long a series, and how many words—now you are planning in earnest, and you will not give up until the plan is roughed out, its weak points either cut out or strengthened, and the first article written.

It was precisely in this way that a well-known series of health articles for popular magazines was conceived and sold. Baseball articles, household economics, styles of men's dress, social etiquette series, sermonettes, articles instructing in arts, crafts and sports—an untold variety of strictly magazine and newspaper-magazine material—have been so devised, and similar yet fresh ideas are in constant demand. The field is the world, with all its contents, seen and unseen.

6. Broad Classes of Material

When you make your list of kinds of material, suppose

you do so under the following general divisions, and then, as has been suggested, under each add as many sub-kinds as you have observed or can invent. It will be seen at once that many magazine articles touch more than one of these divisions, but one type is certain to be predominant, thus placing the material decidedly in one class.

(a) *Anecdotes*
(b) *Jests*
(c) *Humorous and Satirical Sketches*
(d) *Information-Items*
(e) *Editorials and Interpretations*
(f) *Travel and Outdoors Articles*
(g) *Articles of Methods and Information*
(h) *Inspirational and Human-Interest Articles*
(i) *Essays and Discussions*
(j) *Criticisms and Reviews*
(k) *Poetry and Verse*
(l) *Fiction and Drama*

QUESTIONS AND EXERCISES

1. What do you understand by an article that "sprawls?"

2. Try to find a magazine contribution that is weakened by not aiming at one definite effect.

3. Point out how it could have been bettered.

4. If the article is a short one, revise it.

5. Give an example of magazine material that *effectively* touches more than one type.

6. Which type predominates?

7. May a writer hurt his work by rigidly conforming his material to one type?

8. Mark in a newspaper those articles which may be classed as magazine material. Do not include editorials, paragraphs, jests, or verse.

9. What are the dangers of early specialization in writing?

10. What are the benefits?

11. Try to suggest a fresh idea for a magazine article on a subject with which you are familiar or on which you know where to get fresh material.

12. Suggest the manner of treatment, length, and type of magazine into which you think it would fit.

13. Select from any periodical an article which contains an idea for a series.

14. Apply the method of questioning given on page 24.

15. Rough out the series, but, as yet, do not write in full.

16. Add any general classes you can to the tentative list given on page 25.

17. Add all the sub-classes possible under each.

18. Begin a large note-book, or a card index, allowing plenty of space to each class and sub-class of magazine material so that theme-suggestions may be inserted from time to time. Give special space to those subjects and kinds of material that interest you most. This subject will be expanded in the next chapter.

CHAPTER IV

THE SOURCES OF MAGAZINE MATERIAL

Until we are confronted by the problem of finding many different things to write about, and each fresh enough to command a market, it is well enough to wait for ideas to suggest themselves, but earlier or later we find that themes do not pop into mind with regularity enough, and when they do come are not of sufficiently general interest to meet our needs. Then there remains only one thing to do—*we must put ourselves in the way of getting fresh ideas.* If we set about this intelligently it will prove to be not a difficult matter. It is, however, far removed from the peaceful practice of twiddling the thumbs.

1. *The Specific Sources of Material*

(a) *Experience* is the first and most important spring of ideas. Unless we drink from its refreshing waters the mind becomes jaded and refuses to invent.

But how shall we gain experience? If we can afford to wait, it will come; but most of us find that when experience does not visit us we must scrape acquaintance. "Down among men," not secluded in a book-lined study, life moves with color and deep breath. Where men plan and battle and scheme and suffer and fail and achieve, experience has her haunts.

This is not to say that the life of ordinary duties does not

furnish experiences worth recording, even adventures the most thrilling. It does; but the magazine writer must be something of a dramatist, and train himself to see in the commonplace those hinge-situations which are big with meaning to those who read his words. We must come to see in our lives what that great American maker of plays who went down with the *Lusitania* cheerfully said that he saw in death, "a beautiful adventure." Mary E. Wilkins Freeman found in the quiet of New England village life plenty of rich material.

To use experience in journalism is to capitalize self—and others. It is to probe among men and things till we find the hidden nerve ganglia which are the sources of significant action; it is to gather and compare, to weigh and contrast, until the truly *vital* facts of what we see are understood. By our own experiences we learn to know others. With all your getting, get experience—then store and use it.

The most sheltered lives have known literatesque experiences and may gain more. Question yourself: What have I seen? Where have I been? What have I been? What have I felt? What have I done? What have I heard? Whom have I known? The past, the present, the possible future—no one can lack experience who draws a *conscious* breath.

Experience may come, or be invited, in ways common or uncommon. You may throw away your street car ticket—a sort of receipt check—as Mark Twain did fifteen times in Berlin; or go out without a dollar to earn a living after the manner of Professor Wyckoff, of Princeton, and so give the

world another volume like "The Workers;" or work in a southern cotton mill like Marie Van Vorst; or cruise the oceans in a little boat like Jack London; or shoot the rapids on a raft that is sure to be wrecked as did Caroline Lockhart; or just dig to the bottom of the one subject that interests you—anyhow, in the most prudent or the most daring how, only somehow, *live*, and you will have opened the great mine of material. Your next holiday, your next vacation, even your next day's work will open up something worth while. What you will, you can.

(b) *Observation* is the second source-spring of material, and it really is a part of what we have just been considering—Experience. To observe means less to look at things than to look into them. An owl does the one; a scientist the other. Think of the suggestions to be found merely in the guide book to any great city. Look. Look often. Look long. Look accurately. Look understandingly. Look with the purpose of writing. Never say there is nothing new to write of so long as you have one eye left. And when that is gone there still remains the greater eye of the mind.

(c) *Thought and Reflection* should be coupled as sources of material. After we have thought ourselves into and around a subject—and remember that to think means to see a thing as it is, to weigh it in its relations, and to formulate a statement or a conclusion concerning it—we must give ourselves over to reflection. This process of re-imaging ideas—which are the raw materials of thought—is a sort of filtration. Train yourself to do this and the clear waters will be worth bottling for public consumption.

Most thought-reflection comes short of being valuable because it stops with a single phase of a subject, or at most with an unrelated number of such phases. But the successful writer persists in thought on one line until he has a tested chain. This is *consecutive* thinking—one tried link is welded to another until the series is sound and complete; it is the only thinking that is likely to produce material fit to print. However light and airy may be your literary purpose—for a chain may be of gossamer or fit to stay a super-dreadnought—still must your thinking form a chain, with each link sound, set unobtrusively in its place, and all making up an adequate whole. "Information consists of a fact, or a group of facts; knowledge is *organized* information—knowledge knows a fact in relation to other facts." [1]

(d) *Imagination* is an expansion of reflection. Yet it is a thing most vital. In the conduct of armies, in playing a game, in planning a business, in conceiving an article, in composing a sonnet, imagination is a prime factor. "The human race," declared Napoleon, "is governed by its imagination." [2]

Imagination—by which we mean both the faculty and the process of making mental images—is either reproductive or productive. By the one we recall what we have once seen or imaged; by the other we invent, with such material as our beings possess. No faculty of the writer is

[1] *The Art of Public Speaking.*

[2] For a fuller treatment of Imagination, see the chapter entitled "Riding the Winged Horse," in *The Art of Public Speaking*, by J. Berg Esenwein and Dale Carnagey, published uniform with this volume in "The Writer's Library."

more closely related to his success, and none, therefore, is better worth cultivating.

(e) *Conversation.* I was once closely associated with a well-known college president who constantly educated himself by asking questions. He was a good-hearted vampire. Upon every specialist who came within reach he fastened his eye, and began to question. The range of that man's practical knowledge was amazing. In consequence, his chapel talks day by day were packed with the most fascinating up-to-the-moment information of what worthwhile men were doing and thinking in a thousand fields. What a writer he would have made, had he not chosen the task of training men more directly!

The secret of the reporter's power is not to frighten the birds. John Burroughs sits out in the woods near "Slabsides," his study, and moves not at all until the wild creatures come and twitter to him their secrets. So must the interviewer get close to those whom he would cause to talk; so must you and I identify our interests with those whose knowledge we would tap for material. But this interest can no more be feigned than Mr. Burroughs could pretend to be harmless among the wild folk. Human lives have marvelous things to disclose, but they are not likely to reveal them to one whose curiosity outsteps his sympathy.

(f) *Reading* is a great yet often a dangerous source of magazine material, because so few are willing to make it merely complementary to, instead of the substance of, what they write. The writer should use books for three purposes only: First, to feed his whole life of thought, feel-

ing, and pleasure; second, to inform himself; third, to stimulate his invention.

The first two purposes have been treated by a thousand advisers; the last needs a word or two here.

It is unsafe to read merely to accept. In the process of testing the statements of an author, we think. Read Ruskin, for example, or Carlyle, or Emerson, and you are helped more by what you are able to deny than by what you can quickly affirm. Let a great writer once arouse you to protest and you have won to something golden—a thought of your own. But—read not only to deny.

"Unsuspected treasures lie in the smallest library. Even when the owner has read every last page of his books it is only in rare instances that he has full indexes to all of them, either in his mind or on paper, so as to make available the vast number of varied subjects touched upon or treated in volumes whose titles would never suggest such topics.

"For this reason it is a good thing to take an odd hour now and then to browse. Take down one volume after another and look over its table of contents and its index. (It is a reproach to any author of a serious book not to have provided a full index, with cross references.) Then glance over the pages, making notes, mental or physical, of material that looks interesting and usable. Most libraries contain volumes that the owner is 'going to read some day.' A familiarity with even the contents of such books on your own shelves will enable you to refer to them when you want help. Writings read long ago should be treated in the same way—in every chapter some surprise lurks to delight you.

"In looking up a subject do not be discouraged if you do not find it indexed or outlined in the table of contents—you are sure to discover some material under a related title.

"Suppose you set to work somewhat in this way to gather references on 'Thinking': First you look over your book titles, and there is Schaeffer's 'Thinking and Learning to Think.' Near it is Kramer's 'Talks to Students on the Art of Study' —that seems likely to provide some material, and it does. Naturally you think next of your book on psychology, and there is help there. If you have a volume on the human intellect you will have already turned to it. Suddenly you remember your encyclopedia and your dictionary of quotations—and now material fairly rains upon you; the problem is what *not* to use. In the encyclopedia you turn to every reference that includes or touches or even suggests 'Thinking;' and in the dictionary of quotations you do the same. The latter volume you find peculiarly helpful because it suggests several volumes to you that are on your own shelves—you never would have thought to look in them for references on this subject. Even fiction will supply help, but especially books of essays and biography. Be aware of your own resources.

"To make a general index to your library does away with the necessity for indexing individual volumes that are not already indexed." [1] It will literally multiply the value of your library. How this may be done is explained on page 39.

There is one sort of book that especially awakens ideas—

[1] *The Art of Public Speaking.*

the curious, old, out-of-the-way volume containing facts which start you to thinking. The library of every man of letters contains a number of such interesting books. For years he may have been promising himself to write an article on the origin of names—the idea came from an obscure book by Charlotte M. Yonge.

Then, a youth's magazine might gladly accept some stories of the ant-folk—Dr. McCook knew all about them and put his knowledge into a little-known volume. Here now is a book on mediæval armament which is full of suggestions for a feature article comparing the old with the modern, and showing the present astonishing revival of old means of defense and offense.

The second-hand book stalls and the city libraries teem with magazine material which may be marketed if we are willing to add to our reading a final supreme source of information:

(g) *Research.* When Miss Ida Tarbell was commissioned by Mr. S. S. McClure to write a life of Lincoln she was not content to read books—she went to original documents at home and abroad. Professor William Sloane's "Life of Napoleon" is authoritative because he dug and dug and dug again until he had unearthed what other less patient diggers had not reached.

Some time ago an ambitious young lady came to me for help. She could write, but *what* should she write?

"What do you know?" I asked.

Ceramics, it appeared. But the market for such material did not seem to be wide. Presently she remarked that nowadays it was not necessary to go to Europe for fine pottery—

it was now "made in America." So here was an idea. I told her to make a list of several similar things—conversation with acquaintances soon expanded the number to about a dozen—which were now made in America. These she prepared carefully and in a bright, chatty way gave all the popular information she could gather on how the things were made; showed how America is preparing to do them better than ever before, and submitted the idea to the magazine section of a certain Sunday newspaper. The first article on pottery was satisfactory, and an order for the series was forthcoming.

It is mere platitude to say that fields of this sort are unending. Look patiently and with an eye to popular interest until you find the field, dig into it until you are sure you have found facts which are not commonly known, vitalize those facts by connecting them with some human interest, dress the ideas in the most fascinating form you can, and you have an article. This first effort may not sell but if beneath your hat a writer walks, you will sell your material before long.

Not the least valuable part of such research work is the *by-product* of information. The miner does not confine himself to the main leads, but notes the side-veins and pockets—after a while he will possess himself of these treasures also, and at last he will even rob the pillars. A study of the tree may lead you to an article on the habits of the parasite. An article on paper may suggest an item on economy. Consideration of physical training methods may uncover a recipe for a home-made liniment.

2. *Conserving Material*

The memory is an indispensable part of every writer's equipment, but some day it will surely develop a leak. Therefore early form

(*a*) *The Note-Book Habit.* Strange as it may seem, many young writers do not know how to keep a note-book. Most writers are content with any style of blank book small enough to be convenient, but the more methodical use the loose-leaf sort, both because any given section may be expanded indefinitely, thus giving assurance that the arrangement will never become disordered, and for the more important reason that individual leaves may be detached and filed in one of the ways presently to be explained.

Suppose you attend a lecture and hear a striking statement. You may note it thus:

> In lecturing on "Aids to Memory" Professor Hart said that we forget the things (a) to which we do not pay close attention, (b) which do not interest us, and (c) which are crowded out of our minds by more pressing matters.

To this you may wish to add a reflection of your own, as:

> Why does association of ideas tend to intensify the original fact to be remembered instead of switching the memory to the lesser idea or fact?

Or you may merely note a bit of information:

> *Magazine Circulation*
>
> Five American periodicals (1916) have reached a circulation of two millions each.

To this you may want to add their names, circulations, and other data.

Examine Hawthorne's "American Note-Book" to see how he set down plot-ideas for stories, names of characters, details of their dress, chance phrases, bits of possible dialogue, and the like. Even if his book is not accessible to you, the practice is.

(*b*) *The Vest-Pocket Card.* It is a good plan to carry in the pocket or the hand-bag a number of cards or papers perforated to fit the small loose-leaf note-book, or at least suitable for the card index. In this way ideas may be prevented from taking wing.

(*c*) *Filing Systems.* The greatest weakness of the ordinary note-book is that once the idea is set down it is liable to be lost from lack of indexing. Various devices have been successfully used to overcome this difficulty, which inheres in the paste-in scrap book even more annoyingly than in the note-book, whose loose-leaf arrangement may be readily alphabetized. Yet, in either kind of book, cuttings and notes soon become too bulky for inclusion in one small volume. Then the literary worker begins to consider a practicable filing system, and of these there are several of merit. Three, however, are worth describing here.

(1) **The Pocket System** is a loose-leaf home-made scheme, and is made thus: In any cover designed to receive loose leaves—preferably leaves of letter size (8½ x 11 inches)—fix any number of sheets of very heavy, tough paper of a surface unglazed and sufficiently rough to take

mucilage readily. These heavy sheets, of course, must be pierced so as to fit into the loose-leaf binder.

Cut strips of strong but rather thin paper, such as a good bond, to a uniform size of seven by two and three-eighths (7 x 2⅜ inches). Gum three edges—one long edge and the two shorter edges—of each strip to a width of about three-eighths of an inch, using a strong, permanent mucilage. Then paste the four strips of paper, one above the other—I do not mean on top of each other—on each large sheet or leaf, allowing the upper, ungummed, edge of the horizontal strip to remain open. Be sure to place the strips within a fraction of an inch of the right-hand margin of the leaf, for the left margin will be perforated for binding; and do not place the top pocket too close to the upper margin.

You now have made four pockets on each sheet, the inside of each pocket being about two inches deep and about six inches wide. You may make two narrower pockets instead of one out of each strip by running a line of gum down the center of the strip, as it is fixed horizontally to the leaf.

These pockets may be used as receptacles for cuttings or notes, and may be self-indexed by allowing the headings to protrude above the pocket, or the face of the pocket itself may be indexed with its contents.

This is not a cheap system, by any means, and entails some trouble, unless you wish to pay someone to prepare the pockets for you, but it is a very handy scheme for filing.

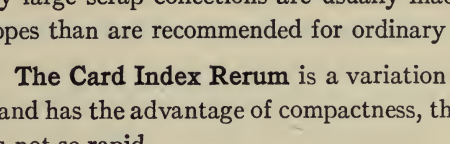
(2) **The Envelope System** consists of simply a set of small, tough envelopes filed alphabetically by guide cards, lettered on the exposed tab, and kept in a desk drawer, a

box, or a filing cabinet. In these envelopes are kept both cuttings and notes, and the face of the envelope—written upon in the same direction as when one addresses a letter —serves to index its contents.

Filed alphabetically in the same series as the envelopes may be cards, cut to the same size, on which notes and library references have been made. The method of making library references will be explained presently.

Very large scrap collections are usually made in larger envelopes than are recommended for ordinary use.

(3) **The Card Index Rerum** is a variation of the foregoing and has the advantage of compactness, though reference is not so rapid.



On the card just illustrated, clippings are indexed by giving the numbers of the envelope in which they are filed. The envelopes may be of any size desired, or even of varying size, as may be needed, and kept in any convenient receptacle. The essential thing is that each envelope must be numbered and kept in its numerical place. On the foregoing example, "Progress of S., Envelope 16,"

will represent a clipping, filed in Envelope 16, which of course has been numbered arbitrarily.

The fractions on the card refer to books in your library—the numerator being the book-number, the denominator referring to the page. Thus, "S. a fallacy $\frac{9}{210}$," refers to page 210 of volume 96 in your library. By some arbitrary sign—say by using red ink—you may index a reference to a public library book.

If you preserve your magazines, important articles may be indexed by month and year. An entire volume on a subject may be indicated, like the (imaginary) book by "Forbes." If you clip the articles, it is better to index them by number, according to the envelope system you have adopted.

Your own writings and notes may be filed in envelopes with the cuttings or in a separate series and indexed in the same way as the cuttings.

When your cards accumulate so as to make ready reference difficult under a single alphabet, you may subdivide each letter by subordinate guide cards marked by the vowels, A, E, I, O, U. Thus. "Antiquities" would be filed in A, under *Ai*, because A *begins* the word, while the *second* letter of the word, *n*, comes after the vowel *i* in the alphabet yet before the next vowel, *o*. In the same manner, "Beecher" would be filed under *Be*, in B; and "Hydrogen" would come under *Hu*, in H.

The cards referred to in "(2) The Envelope System" may, of course, be made to bear both notes and library references, or so may the faces of the envelopes. However, it would seem that the better way is to use cards

or bits of stiff paper for notes and library references, and envelopes for cuttings, small pamphlets and manuscripts. Whether the envelopes should be filed numerically, with their numbers endorsed on the alphabetized cards for reference, or filed together with the cards in one alphabetical arrangement, is solely a matter for personal choice.

3. Using the Work of Others

A single word of caution must be set down against poaching on anyone's preserves. Clip and note all you will, but fix in your mind the truth that by reading too much when you are collecting material, or by using facts almost exclusively garnered from note-books, you will strangle your own ability to invent. The writer who dares to use his own ideas may arrive more slowly than the ingenious but unscrupulous imitator, but when he arrives he will remain, while the literary copyist—not to say thief—will be cast out. Use no material that you have not first made so thoroughly your own that it has been assimilated and made a part of your equipment. Then be sure to express it in your own words—or quote and give credit.

QUESTIONS AND EXERCISES

1. Set down as many subjects for articles as "pop into your head" in ten minutes.

2. Mark those of which you are conscious of having thought before.

3. Did you notice a tendency to think of too broad a

subject to admit of satisfactory treatment in a single article?

4. If so, select one such broad subject and narrow it until you have a *specific* subject.

5. Name one kind of experience that seems to possess value as magazine material.

6. Outline briefly how it might be treated.

7. Can you think of any experience within your reach that you might try to gain for the purpose of gathering material?

8. What do you understand by "capitalizing self?"

9. Are there any obvious limits to which this might properly be done?

10. Examine any city guide and suggest one or two themes for articles which occur to you.

11. What do you think of an encyclopedia as a direct source of magazine material?

12. Give your own definitions of (a) "thought," (b) "consecutive thinking," (c) "reflection," (d) "imagination."

13. Get an interview with some person of attainments and outline an article from the interview.

14. From recent reading, suggest a theme for an article.

15. Suggest an interesting field for research, with magazine material in mind.

16. Give a full outline of an article you would like to write, stating the sources of your material.

17. Write the article.

18. What is plagiarism?

CHAPTER V

INFORMATION AND METHOD ITEMS

Not all magazine writing is literary, either in purpose or in method, but a considerable body consists of highly condensed paragraphs of information and methods of work.

The writer who is determined to gain experience and make his pen-work pay from the start will harbor no false shame but will at once give some attention to the markets for such paragraphic items. Whether these are to remain his chief, or perhaps only, means of getting into print will depend on ability plus push. How much energy he will take from larger work in order to devote it to such writing he must himself decide, but at all events it is decidedly worth while to search out items for the markets and markets for the items. Many departmental editors—not all of whom, by any means, are resident in the city of publication or devote their entire time to the work—have won their positions by showing ability to send in helpful and reliable paragraphs in sufficient numbers and frequently enough to attract the editor-in-chief. One must begin somewhere, and the first step is at the bottom of the stairs. Even if you despise the occasional dollars—or, in some cases, subscriptions, merchandise, or advertising space—which may be offered as pay for paragraphic material, why contemn the exercise in versatility that all such writing affords?

1. The Necessary Equipment

For writing paragraphic items (a) *the prime requisite is interest in this kind of material.* Examine all the domestic, agricultural, business, popular science, and other specialized magazines you can. Note how many of them have departments made up chiefly or wholly of information-paragraphs, discoveries, short cuts, methods of work, and curious or interesting matters. If these interest you, you can furnish something on like lines. Even when a department seems to be written entirely by a department editor and the paragraphs are not signed, remember that some of them are bought from contributors. Some such paragraphs, indeed, are pilfered from various sources and with slight rewriting appear under the department editor's name, but reliable periodicals do not encourage this sort of thing—there are real markets for your ideas, if you sift the grain.

(b) *An observing eye* is also necessary—no amount of anxiety can atone for its lack. Alertness of mind is the discoverer's principal qualification. What one overlooks the other coins into legal tender. Observe not only the kinds of material used, but the facts and habits of life all around you.

(c) *A handy note-book* is the next thing needful—what is recorded will not escape.

(d) *The habit of absolute accuracy* is the final requisite. A mistake in the recipe, a slight mis-statement of fact, a name wrongly spelled, a conclusion based on too little data, the oversight of omitting one step in the process, will work

annoyance or danger for someone. Your inaccuracy is likely to be reported, with the result that at least one door may be closed to the contributor whom the editor has relentlessly labeled "unreliable." Feel your responsibility, and from the outstart spare no pains to establish the utter accuracy of the most trivial contribution. Aside from the matter of self-respect, you will be forming an invaluable literary habit.

2. *Where to Find Material*

It is everywhere, of course; but specifically where? The general sources of magazine material as previously outlined are of course the particular sources as well but you must approach them with this sort of writing definitely in mind.

(a) *Tap the veins of daily experience.* Has not your own use of broom and butter and bed-linen taught you some unique economy of time or material? Does not the care of your automobile, the management of your office detail, your experience in farm or garden, the use of your clothes, a precaution, a remedy, a sales method, an accounting device, a fishing method, a church or a home entertainment, suggest something of value to others? Turn your eyes inward to see the what and the how that may prove helpful. If you know of no immediate market, store the idea in your note-book. The blind political economist of England, Fawcett, has defined capital as "the result of saving laid up to assist future production." Be a capitalist.

(b) *Study the lives and work of others.* A visit to a school, a workshop, a camp, a sanitarium, an asylum; a con-

versation with a traveller, an artist, a tramp, a business man, a teacher; the pages of a foreign newspaper, a book, an old magazine—these and uncounted other sources of information are fairly clamoring to be opened. You need not depend entirely on first-hand experience or observation. Tell business, professional, or home-keeping friends of what you are trying to do—out of their experience-pack they will draw something to help you, and others through you. Not infrequently, you will find material for a full-length article where you thought to gather merely a paragraph.

In seeking help from persons and printed matter you should, however, stand on your own feet so far as possible. If your friend gives you a suggestion, tell him you are going to use it. It may not be necessary to give credit in the paragraph, but suppose that your friend was intending to use the idea himself? Your frankness may save embarrassment—and a friendship.

Never offer for publication recipes and devices culled from printed matter unless by experiment you have been able to make the method your own by improving upon it. In matters of literary uprightness it is better to lean backward than forward.

(c) *Inventiveness* is a rich source of "methods" material. Though invention is a native gift, inventiveness is a habit of mind, and hence may be cultivated. Many brains teem with fresh ideas of how to do things, but because no revolutionary patent seems in prospect the schemers allow their ideas to flit by unrecorded and unused. When any such idea comes to you, and you feel that you are not likely to put it on the market because it is not big enough to war-

rant large exploitation, make a note of it, test its value if possible, and offer it for sale to some magazine.

(d) *The camera and the sketch pencil* are not only sources of, but adjuncts to, paragraphic material. Some magazines, such as *Popular Science Monthly*, Chicago, *Popular Mechanics*, Chicago, and *Scientific American*, New York, make a specialty of using illustrations with reports of inventions and discoveries. Others, like *Leslie's Weekly*, New York, buy photographs of really striking current events and persons in the public eye, while others like *The Strand*,[1] London and New York, and *Wide World*, London and New York, use pictures of strange happenings, freaks of nature, and the like. These together with the newspapers, do not, of course, exhaust the markets for photographic material, whether offered with or without full descriptive text, for magazines devoted to agriculture, gardening, the home, outdoor life, sports, advertising, business, and in fact nearly all the illustrated periodicals, use photographs when they suit their peculiar fields. It is wise to begin a list of all such markets, but the utmost discrimination as to subject and timeliness is required.[2]

Your own collection of snap-shots may suggest a marketable item, and also teach you to carry your camera on journeys and walks so as to be ready for the interesting and the unusual. It is worth remembering that editors who have been hoaxed into accepting fanciful statements are likely to value photographic evidence that an unusual matter is precisely as reported.

[1] American edition discontinued during the European war.
[2] Number 120 of the Photo-Miniature, 103 Park Avenue, New York, contains helpful instructions on this subject.

A clear print is absolutely necessary—glazed paper makes the best reproduction. Write your name and address on the back of the photograph, add the descriptive material in the fewest, simplest and most striking words possible, and mail the photograph flat and so packed that it cannot break. Study the special requirements of magazines that use photographs, for the demand in this field is highly specific.

No great skill in draughtsmanship is demanded in sketching devices and inventions for the magazine. If you have such skill, all the better, but if your idea is good enough and it is sketched plainly, the editor will have the necessary drawing made.

3. How to Write a Paragraph

Make a study of the items presently given, with a view to discovering the methods the writers have used. Add to this examination a scrutiny of paragraphs in other periodicals, and the time spent will repay you.

The prosperity of the item lies in the first paragraph, and the opening paragraph succeeds or fails with the initial sentence. An editor recently quoted the following opening as a good one: "In an out-of-the-way corner of Cincinnati expert dentists are engaged in filling, with finest grade gold or platinum, thousands of elks' teeth the year over—and possibly the very tooth on your watch-chain may, at some time, have undergone the curious process involved."

Here we have a clear picture and an interest-provoking statement. See how this same plan has been followed in the succeeding items.

RAISING THE SPELLING STANDARD

Desiring to raise the standard of spelling in my school, I adopted the following plan. At the beginning of the month every pupil is on the honor roll. If any one misses five words during the month he is dropped from the honor roll. Those who remain on it at the end of the month are photographed. I have a Brownie camera and do the work myself. This picture is mounted on a paper bearing the names of Honor Pupils. At the end of the year each pupil who has been on the honor roll every month receives a booklet containing a picture of the honor roll pupils for every month.—*Normal Instructor and Primary Plans.*

MILK FOR POULTRY

The most valuable poultry food available on most farms is milk. Many farmers feed all their surplus milk to the hogs. Milk when fed to hogs, makes flesh that sells for seven or eight cents a pound. When fed to poultry, especially during the winter months, it makes eggs that sell for twenty-five cents a pound, and flesh that brings twice the price ordinarily offered for hogs. And besides, in discriminating markets, milk-fed poultry always sells at a premium.

Given all the milk they will consume, hens will lay well in season and out of season. One cannot over-feed of milk. It is safe to keep it before the hens always.

The vessels in which milk is fed should be washed and scalded daily. Earthenware crocks are the best for the feeding of milk since they are easily cleaned. If wooden troughs or vessels are used, they will, in a very short time, become so fouled that thoro cleaning is almost impossible.

If only a limited quantity of milk is available for the hens, the better way of feeding it is to use it in moistening the mash. When used for this purpose the milk will be evenly distributed to the flock.—*Successful Farming.*

LEATHERETTE BOOK COVERS

With a little ingenuity, some leatherette upholstering material, glue, and a squeegee roller, very neat looking, handy, and service-

able covers may be made for drawings, note-books and snap-shot photograph albums. The cover may be made best on the loose-leaf note-book principle, or may be made to cover a paper-bound book. By studying how any book is bound, it is easily seen how to go about making the cover. When it has been shaped and glued, the whole should be placed between two smooth boards and clamped for ten or twelve hours.—*Popular Science Monthly.*

PLAN TO KEEP THE CHILDREN'S STOCKINGS MATED

I find the following plan very successful in keeping my children's stockings together without the usual sorting over after each washing. I take small snap fasteners and sew one part of the fastener on one stocking at the top, and the other part of the fastener at the top of the other stocking. When the stockings are taken off to be put in the laundry bag each child snaps his pair together. It does not interfere with the washing, and they can be hung on the line without clothespins.—*Today's Magazine.*

HOW TO RENEW CARBON PAPER

Quite by accident I discovered this method, which costs nothing, for renewing carbon paper. Hold the used carbon paper up to a lighted lamp, taking care not to get it close enough to scorch the paper. The heat will cause the carbon to spread over the parts that are bare, leaving the sheet as good as new. The same sheet may be renewed a number of times.—*The Writer's Monthly.*

IF I WERE A SHOE DEALER

I would advertise by showing in my windows the outline of a certain right foot.

Then, both in my windows and in my newspaper advertising, I would invite every customer and prospect to draw the outline of his right foot and send in the drawing. I would advertise that the person whose foot came nearest to being the same shape as the outline shown would receive a prize.

I would make use of all the outlines received, by writing to the various contestants and telling them I had just the shoes to fit their feet, and I would name prices.—*System.*

AN INTERNATIONAL TEST FOR VISION

The International Ophthalmic Congress at Naples, in order to introduce uniformity in methods of measuring vision, has adopted the broken ring of Landolt as the best possible international test for visual acuteness. But as no efforts have been made to use it as cards with test letters are used, it has had little practical value.

However, Dr. Edward Jackson, of Denver, has found that if the broken rings are arranged in a symmetrical group and printed, as here illustrated, on a card that can be turned with any edge uppermost, it constitutes a test independent of a knowledge of letters. The test is placed five meters from the patient. If the direction of the break in the rings is recognized at full distance, full acuteness of vision is demonstrated. If at four and a half meters, the vision is one-tenth defective, and so on.—*Popular Science Monthly.*

A careful examination of the foregoing and similar material will disclose that these paragraphs are marked by seven characteristics:

The utmost brevity is used.

The explanations are so clear that they cannot be misunderstood.

The style is simple and direct, without the slightest trace of "fine writing."

The purpose of the device or idea is succinctly stated at the opening, and then the explanations follow.

The item does not merely give the idea but adds useful details for the operation of the plan.

When a title is used, it is definite, yet does not tell too much.

The ideas are of practical value and appeal to the reader as being usable.

4. Marketing the Items

A full discussion of market problems will be found in a succeeding chapter, but in this place one point must be emphasized: Keep clearly in mind—or, better still, on record—which magazines use methods, which use reports of inventions and appliances, which use experience-items, which use illustrations, and all the varieties of material treated in this chapter.

It is not practicable to give here a list of the periodicals that use paragraphic items, for magazines come and go and their wants change, but it may be said that markets are usually to be found with magazines devoted to woman and the home, popular science, outdoor life, business, agriculture and its allied interests, and some of the professions, crafts and trades. It is decidedly necessary to examine at least one copy of any such periodical before submitting material. The field is large, but specialized. This advice applies equally to material accompanied by illustrations.

QUESTIONS AND EXERCISES

1. Begin a note-book or card index as recommended on pages 36 to 39.

2. Exhibit a specimen page or card showing information bearing on the work discussed in this chapter.

3. Clip at least six items of as many different types and test them by the characteristics named on pages 51, 52.

4. Give an original list of crude—undeveloped—ideas for paragraphic items.

5. Prepare three original items, ready for publication. Test them for the seven needful characteristics.

6. Say to what magazines they might properly be sent.

7. Are any of these ideas big enough to warrant expansion into a full article?

8. Briefly relate any experience you may have had in this field.

9. Present as full a list as possible of the magazines which use paragraphic items from outside contributors.

CHAPTER VI

THE SHORT ARTICLE

At first it may seem like splitting a hair between its north and northwest corners to distinguish the short article from the full-length brother, but as we go on, this separate treatment may be justified by practical considerations.

Lying not exactly midway between the paragraphic item and the long magazine article, because it resembles more nearly the latter, is an essentially modern product which refuses to be classified under any more definite head than that of "short articles." The more journalistic the magazine, the more is this short, lively style of writing in evidence, therefore we may look for it in any of the newer magazines, and in some of the older.

For purposes of treatment, and not because the classification is in any sense exact, we shall examine these shorter pieces under three heads:

1. The Information-Article

The range of subject matter for such offerings is unlimited, though this statement does not apply when one considers any one magazine—the same wise suiting of commodity to market is required here as in every other effort to sell a piece of writing. Periodicals of all sorts use short information-articles, particularly when accompanied by illustrations, but in submitting material the

greatest care must be exercised to choose a subject that will interest the grade of readers to which the magazine caters, and the same is true in considering the method of treatment. To any experienced writer this should be obvious, yet editors are constantly complaining that authors whose names are well known now and then submit to an adult publication material which is almost juvenile in matter, though not in manner—the latter would be a more forgivable quality.

In the following article, which was illustrated with one photographic half-tone, we have a distinctly simple tone, yet its information interests older folk as well as younger. In fact, it is a fascinating anomaly—the explanation of which may not be hard to find—that grandma loves *St. Nicholas*, while Mildred in grammar school dotes on *Hearst's!* Nevertheless, the general statement holds: We must aim our articles at a supposititious class of readers.

THE FLYING-SQUIRREL

Of all the tenants of the woods, the flying-squirrel is perhaps the most seldom seen, yet this is not due to any scarcity of the little animal, which in fact is among the most numerous of the squirrel family, but to its habit of moving almost entirely at night. Should you doubt this last statement, enter some patch of forest convenient to your home and strike solidly upon the trunks of such trees as appear to be dead and have one or more holes in the trunk; in about one time out of five your efforts will be rewarded by the appearance in the opening, as if by magic, of the bright eyes of a flying-squirrel.

There are two species of flying-squirrel; the larger is much the same in size and color as our common red squirrel, while the other and rarer sort is of a grayish-cream shade and a trifle larger than the chipmunk. The habits of the two are similar; both are

nocturnal, both inhabit by preference the hollow of some decayed tree—although they are not infrequently found in the discarded nests of the gray squirrel—and both are exceedingly gentle.

These squirrels do not, of course, fly; but their legs are connected at the "wrists" with a light membrane which serves as a sort of parachute, although it has some of the possibilities of an aëroplane. Before making a flight, the squirrel will run rapidly up the trunk of a tree and, when he has attained a sufficient height, spring boldly off into space. With legs spread wide apart, so as to present the greatest possible surface to the air, and his extraordinarily wide and fluffy tail serving as a rudder, the squirrel sails swiftly through the air, often for one hundred feet or even more, until he reaches the trunk of another tree, up which he runs in order to attain height for a new flight. By this method flying-squirrels are able rapidly to cover long distances with little exertion, for often, when nearing the end of a long sail, they will point themselves upward and by means of their "rudders" and the impetus given will rise almost to the height at which they started—just as a boy riding down hill may be carried over a lesser up-grade at the foot.

Flying-squirrels are lighter for their size than any other animal, their bones being hollow, as are those of the birds, probably in order to give the greatest strength with the least weight; when held in the hand, they appear to be nothing but a bundle of fine, silky fur. Like many other squirrels, their diet is almost exclusively vegetable, and they are never guilty of bird-murder and egg-snatching as are their kinsmen, the "reds."

Because of their gentleness, flying-squirrels make most interesting pets, and will never bite unless very roughly handled.

—A. E. SWOYER, in *St. Nicholas*.

The simplicity of this little article, which is not printed as a model of good English, enforces an important point: The short information-article is not aimed at the "high-brow," therefore it must be free from all involved sentences and remote allusions. Just as in the informative paragraph, we expect compression, directness, accuracy, a

popular subject, an interesting opening, and a swift close. All extraneous matter and all display of opinions must be rigidly excluded.

Practically all the specialized magazines, and many of the popular type, are in the market for short information-pieces which may be used as "fillers," or even in departments. The subject matter need not always bear on the specialty of the magazine but may be quite general in scope. However, a more certain market will be found for such articles as treat of the special field covered by the magazine to which it is offered. *The Kindergarten Review* contains an article by President Joseph Swain, of Swarthmore College, outlining "A Peace Program," to insure international peace, and *The Herald of Health* prints one on the "Why Men Move Chairs," but manifestly the editors intended that these variations should serve for relief in variety—they reserve their welcome mostly for articles within their own lines.

2. *The Experience-Article*

Here the scope is almost exclusively marked by the special character of the magazine, for though the physician probably feels that he knows how to sell shoes, he does not expect to read advice on that subject in his medical journal.

A good example of the experience-article is the following:

LITERARY BOOKKEEPING

Every business requires bookkeeping; and when one is making a business of writing short articles some system is necessary.

The financial end of it demands books and the overburdened brain wants to be free to do creative work instead of trying to remember that which has been done. We all realize this.

Probably, therefore, you have formulated your own record book, or have one of the kind published for writers; but perhaps you may get a bit of an idea from my system, which, like that of many a corner grocer, has just evolved itself out of growing needs. So I venture to tear out two leaves—figuratively speaking:

For two books are necessary, as I see it; one a manuscript record in which each article or story has its separate page, and the other a mailing record in which I can see at a glance just how many are "out," where, and what have been recently returned. Oh, yes, mine frequently come back, but the postman must merely carry them out again, possibly in the next mail, allowing me just time enough for examination and any needed revision.

Each book is of regular memorandum size, 3 x 7 inches, to fit the pigeon-holes of my desk. A leaf from the "MSS. Record" looks like this:

No. of MS.

TITLE

"The Autumn Garden"

No. of words 800 — Date of writing May, 1915

June 8, '15, Garden Mag. — July 3, '15

July 5, '15, Sprague Co. — $6.50

The left-hand dates indicate the time of sending; the right-hand ones the date of return, while the "cash" marked in the

center of the page acts as a big period to the story's wanderings, the price paid—in this instance, by the Sprague Company. Of course the details on this specimen page are fictitious.

Often one sending is enough; but sometimes the column goes down the leaf, thus moving the beautful period nearer the bottom.

Why are the prices placed in exactly that spot? No reason whatever, merely the habit, and possibly the desire of seeing them easily as I turn the leaves of the little book.

I am filling my fifteenth record book, so you may know the plan has been satisfactory.

The other book, the "Mailing Record," is needed to keep tab on what one has sent out. It is a crude affair, but such a source of quick information that I consult it much more frequently than the separate entries. A leaf from it would resemble this:

May

	Stamps	Rec'd
May 2; "A Pillar of Fire" Meade Co.	4	$7.00
" 5; "His View-point" American Boy	8	6.50
" 7; "Building a Plot" Writer's World	4	
" 8; "Joy Stories" Acton Co.	4	

This May record of mailing (incomplete, of course) shows me exactly the amount of work sent out in that time, the cost of postage, and what the work has brought in. The black line down the side marks "goods returned."

In this, the first two were taken, and netted $13.50, the third was sent back, and the fourth is still to be heard from.

At the end of the month the postage column is added, but often it takes many months before the last can be set down, thanks to time-taking editors.

At the close of a year it is a simple matter to take a blank leaf next to the December record and balance my year's work, as to cost, remuneration, number of manuscripts sent, and number accepted.

Another thing I am beginning to do to save labor: When an article is newly written and fresh in mind, I pencil on the MSS. Record a number of places where it might be sold if it should meet rejection on its first voyage; then, months later, when I am busy on something else, I do not have to re-read it before sending it out, or let it go at a venture. This is merely pencilled so that the suggestions may be erased when it has, like Noah's dove, found "a rest for the sole of its foot."

These little schemes have helped me and have been born of necessity, so they are passed on that others may formulate their own books, incorporating just the ideas that appeal to them.

—Lee McCrae, in *The Writer's Monthly*.

The matter of the experience-article has been sufficiently forecasted in the treatment of the experience-item, in Chapter V. As for manner, some thought must be given to that.

Readers resent being instructed in a "superior" sort of air, therefore a gentle way of *suggesting* methods of work is a manner to be desired. For a similar reason a too-free use of "I" is not wise, nor is a broad condemnation of methods other than the one presented, while complicated explanations, of course, confuse rather than help. Notice especially the cheery, chatty style of the foregoing little article.

One of the chief faults editors find in experience-manuscripts is a solemn elaboration of a method of doing a well-

nigh useless thing—a mere manufacturing of red tape. When such articles do get into print they exasperate readers who themselves know what to do and how to do it. Probably this sort of buncombe is the outgrowth less of experience than of a desire to write. When a real saving of time or money or effort grows out of experience a welcome for the concise "story" of what it is and how it works out will surely be found on some printed page. Every periodical devoted to a class or a calling has open doors for experience-articles in its own field.

3. The Interpretative Article

I use this term for want of one more precise, meaning the short piece which, while dealing basically with facts, does not stop there but draws an inference, enforces a theory, or teaches a lesson. It is precisely in the tone of the time-honored "editorial," and as such wields an influence commensurate with its own merit and the standing of the magazine in which it appears.

While in magazines of all classes the information-article is more frequently met with, the contributed editorial—if I may use the descriptive though contradictory term—is by far the higher piece of literary work, and for that, if for no other reason, is worth cultivating. In fact, facility in writing this type of article is the thing that has seated a number of editors in their chairs. To be sure, the fact that certain editors—notably the present writers on *Collier's Weekly*, *The Independent*, *The Outlook*, and other magazines that comment on current events—are so gifted

in writing trenchant interpretative paragraphs limits the market for this sort of material, yet for those who do it well—and know whereof they write—there are desirable openings.

Of the four examples which follow two are contributed, as the attached names show, and two are editorial in the usual sense.

INTERESTING STORY OF A $100 BILL

Mrs. Davis came into possession of a new $100 bill. Prizing this money because it was the first she ever earned, she kept the original bill in her possession, most of the time on her person. Only a short time before her death, at eighty-four, were her relatives aware that she still had the bill.

But Mrs. Davis had exhibited her desire to save money many years before she came into possession of the $100 note. When a little girl, nine years old, she deposited $10 in a savings bank, and received a pass book. She carried this book with her for seventy-five years. Three weeks before her death she told her grandson she was curious to know if the bank was still doing business and what had become of her $10 deposit. A letter giving the number of her pass book, the amount of the deposit and her maiden and present name, was written. Just one week from the day the letter was posted a reply was received to the effect that the deposit, together with the accrued interest for seventy-five years, amounting in all to $325.65, was in the bank for Mrs. Davis.

A striking lesson is taught by Mrs. Davis's experience. When a little girl she invested only $10, which earned for her the splendid sum of $315.65, and about the safety of which she had no worry during seventy-five years. No one can tell what must have been her worry for forty-five years over the safety of the $100 bill she prized so much. Strange that she did not seem to worry over its idleness as well. Had she deposited it with a savings bank paying 4 per cent interest compounded quarterly, the principal and interest would have amounted to the handsome sum of $601.89. The $100 bill would have earned for her five other $100 bills.

Her investment at nine years of age multiplied itself for her thirty-one times. Her sentiment at the age of thirty-nine, persisted in for forty-five years, deprived her of many comforts in her old age which the $600 would have provided. Her one consolation must have been that her little $10 savings account more than trebled the value of her $100 bill.

—T. P. JUNKIN, in *American Magazine.*

REFORM UNDER COMPULSION

Some reforms are the result of reason, some are due to the morning-after feeling, and some come because the bottle has gone dry. Fire-prevention in the United States—if it ever arrives—will belong to the last-named class.

Every one knows, or might know, the hideous cost of fires in this land of the free and home of the tinder-box house. The wealth burned up or paid for alleged "fire protection" each year is not less than $450,000,000—enough to pay for a new Panama canal every ten months. The life-cost varies, but every year more persons lose their lives through fires in this country than were killed or died of wounds on the American side in the Spanish war.

Yet, in spite of our boasted business acumen, we go on building costly structures in such fashion that they are sure to burn if they get a chance; and in spite of our famed philanthropy, we require millions of people to live and work in imminent risk of being burned to death.

We will quit this criminal folly when the progress of invention and the increasing cost of lumber have made it cheaper and easier to build fire-proof structures than the kind which are at the mercy of every imbecile with a match. We will swear off when the bottle is empty. Better then than never, of course; but if the change comes in our time, let us at least have the grace to refrain from bragging about it.

—GEORGE L. KNAPP, in *Lippincott's Magazine.*

MILK PRICES AGAIN

In a very quiet way, some things have been happening in the milk business.

Keep in mind these three facts:

The consumer in the city is paying the highest price for milk he has ever paid.

The farmer is receiving for milk the lowest price he has ever received.

The milk companies are paying the highest dividends they have ever paid and their stock is watered 90 per cent., whatever the cow may do with her milk as to butter fat.

Last summer we were told that the War had caused the low price. Times were so hard people were not buying milk. There was a glut of milk. Therefore, prices went down below the cost of production.

To-day, the Health Departments of two cities—New York and Boston—declare there is a serious shortage of milk—the Grade B milk, the kind which people of moderate means buy; but the price has not gone up to the farmer; and more and more dairymen are going out of the business.

We are told that war caused the drop in milk and other dairy products last summer. As a matter of fact—not trade trickery to conceal price manipulation—butter exports have increased from three and a half million pounds to ten million pounds, cheese from two and a half million pounds to fifty-four million pounds, and condensed milk from eleven million pounds to thirty-seven million pounds.

Yet the price was dropped automatically to the farmers to such a level that many dairymen went out of the business.

The milk situation has now become an election issue in New England. Boston's report of the rigging of the milk market has gone to more than 50,000 investigators.

Curiously enough, it has been proved by Wisconsin, one of the great dairy states, that the man who has been going up and down the country decrying the dairy farmers as benighted pagans and praising the milk companies for purifying milk and the oleomargarine people for saving public health by giving them adulterated food instead of dairy butter—it has been proved that this Knight of the Milk Pail is publicity agent for the milk trust; and in short, wherever his damning indictment of the farmer has been shouted loudest you will find solid page advertisements of the milk trust

paid for at from $1,200 per page to $4,000. Hush! Of course, there is no connection!

The truth is the milk situation is coming exactly to where New York and Massachusetts and Wisconsin have foreseen it would come. Dairy interests will have to be taken out of trust management and the sale handled by the State. Details of these plans, which are likely to be election issues, will be given fully in another month.—*Current Opinion.*

FOOLISH SHOWMEN

A theatre manager's house is his castle, according to the New York Court of Appeals, and he can exclude from it any critic whose remarks he doesn't like. The only point is that he must shut him out because of his remarks and not on account of his color, creed, and the things he is born with. Apparently, a green and yellow cannibal with rings in his ears can sit beside you if he has two dollars, but the local Shaw or Hazlitt who might perhaps assist in your appreciation of the author's work (or even save you from being bored by it) can be hurled into the cold night. This victory is a legal rather than a moral one, for theatre managers are the last persons in the world to stop people talking about their plays. The case does serve to show again, however, the low estate of our stage. In countries where the people really care about such things—in France, for instance—critics even see plays the night before the first night, so that they may have more time to explain their merits or defects. The learned counsel in this case would, on the other hand, apparently do away with first-night criticism altogether on the ground that it interferes with the manager's inalienable right to sell gold bricks without giving his victims a chance to look them over first. When the manager says that newspapers and their writers "autocratically sway the public patronage of a play," he is either disingenuous or extremely naïve. A dramatic critic may save a soul now and then, but he cannot revolutionize the control of plays until American taste has been revolutionized and somebody besides the critic himself takes his work seriously.—*Collier's.*

Naturally enough, our magazines now print such in-

terpretative material in greater variety than is found on the editorial page of the daily newspaper. Sometimes it is the breezy comment on men and things in *The Saturday Evening Post*, again it is the secular homily of *The Fra*, yet again it is the reserved political expression of *The Outlook*, but always two qualities mark it as a type different from any other: It deals exclusively with one phase of a subject, a little essay in itself; and it is chock-a-block full of *opinion*, insistence on a fixed viewpoint—which is to say, it makes without apology its own interpretation of events and facts. Thus the short interpretative article becomes a rostrum, a pulpit, which someone with a following mounts to say his say.[1]

Other short forms are, of course—the secular preachments of Richard Wightman, the literary homilies of Dr. Van Dyke, the achievements of men of the hour, the letter which finds almost its only market in "The Contributors' Club" of *The Atlantic Monthly*, the little essay, and other variants; but these three notes—information, experience, interpretation—sound through them all; with one other that is or should be common to each: the *single worth-while point*. This is the characteristic quality of the short article. He who pushes that point home with vigor, timeliness and charm will not fail of a reading.

QUESTIONS AND EXERCISES

1. How does the information-article differ from the paragraph of similar purpose?

[1] For suggestions on the thought, arrangement and style of this type of article see Exercise 20, on page 68.

2. Select from any magazine a typical short information-article.

3. Criticise it, favorably or adversely, or both.

4. Do the short information-articles in the better grade of magazines follow any definite order of arrangement, or are they loosely put together?

5. Make a list of three themes for such articles as you think you can write.

6. Make a list of the facts you wish to tell, in an order that will begin with interest and lead up to an interesting fact at the close.

7. Examine a number of such articles in periodicals and compute the average number of words allowed.

8. Write the article outlined in Exercise 6, paying careful attention to the title.

9. What is *climax?*

10. Have you come to a climax in your article?

11. What is anti-climax?

12. Write an experience-article, saying for what class of magazines you think it suited.

13. What do you understand by *interpretation?*

14. Name three groups of facts, or three events, which would be suitable for use in interpretative articles.

15. Write an opening sentence for each.

16. Is each striking? Clear? Too short to be expressive? Too long to be vigorous?

17. Choose one theme of the three and write the first paragraph.

18. Does the second sentence follow naturally on the first?

19. Finish the article, remembering Professor Barrett Wendell's injunction to "end with words that deserve distinction."

20. Test your article by the following considerations: Present-day interest; vital meaning of the facts; soundness of reasoning; clearness of thought; unity of the whole article; singleness of theme, and consequent impression; variety of sentence structure; vigor of statement; popularity of style; ease; satire, if any; humor, if any; sequence of ideas; climax.

CHAPTER VII

THE FULL-LENGTH ARTICLE

Two things it is hard to define satisfactorily: that which is obvious, and that which takes many forms and yet is essentially one. The nature of the magazine article is surely obvious as a form of writing, and it just as certainly takes on a multitude of forms while yet remaining clearly an "article." In its most formal and literary aspect it is an essay; again it will be a concise scientific treatise; still again it may attempt to demonstrate a philosophical thesis; or it will be a straight biography; or a history; or an unadorned exposition of what a thing is and how it differs from other things; or it may consist of a simple explanation of methods of work. Its styles and its purposes are as endless as human ingenuity, exercised to meet human demand. Hence the futility and the needlessness of a formal definition: A magazine article is—a magazine article.

1. What Shall I Write About?

Once I suggested to Dr. Henry Van Dyke that he write on a certain subject. In his gracious way he replied that he had so many things in his mind clamoring for expression that he must give the rest of his life to writing only them. But the author of "Little Rivers" is a full man, ripe and rich in experience. Most younger writers and all beginners are still on the lookout for subjects suitable alike to their own abilities and to public demand.

Doubtless most themes for articles spring into the forefront of the mind and so suggest themselves, but others must be dragged from dark corners of memory, while yet others must be actually created. Even the most alert inventor needs a well-stored mind to draw upon.

The thing to write about is oftenest (a) *the thing that interests you.* The good editor is first of all a man—a woman—of sympathies, enthusiasms, curiosities. Banking on the catholicity of his own interests he chooses for his readers partly what he himself likes, but mostly he is constantly leaping into the twilight to seize the suspected likes of others different from himself.

So it must be with the successful writer. Every day the editor hears or reads these sentences from some reliable contributor: "Here is an article on a subject which has long interested me—I've been wanting to do this for five years." Or, "I think your readers would like this." No man can live an entirely objective life—he must begin with himself. The whole theorem of life is typified by the writer's problem: *Given, self; to find out, non-self.*

The thing that interests you is likely to be (b) *the thing you know outside and in.* How can I write that word "know" in letters ten feet high! *Authority* is the big idea here. If you know your interesting subject only a little, at least be sure that it is (c) *the thing you are in a position to learn about.* Research, intelligent investigation, forms the basis of many a masterly article. Look everywhere—every how—to find *all* the facts. Hasty conclusions spell lame results.

(d) *The thing of wide interest* and (e) *the thing of special*

or class interest are never-failing sources of article-material. Methods of industrial economy attract the many, methods of manufacture appeal to a class. It is a safe rule for the beginner to follow the news in choosing his subjects.

When one is advised to write of (f) *the thing of present interest* it seems like an easy formula, yet so swiftly does life move that we must also have a prophetic eye for (g) *the thing of coming interest.* It was said of President Cleveland that he was in advance of his party because he had his ear to the ground. The writer must be keen to hear the vibrations of on-marching events. Not only must he prepare by gathering material for a hurry-chance, but he must forecast the next swing of public interest. When the next great American dies the recording angel of the press will have his biography all written; when the first cloud, like a baby's fist in size, appears to presage a new national interest, it will find some open-eyed scribe ready to be its press agent—and "it might as well be you."

Two other sorts of subjects must be noted in rapid passing: (h) *the thing that is little known*, yet which has the potentiality of wide interest—like how big guns are made—and (i) *the unfamiliar phase of a familiar thing.* "Inside," "behind the scenes," "personally conducted"—these are sure magic for our public. Nor is the passion for seeing unfamiliar works and for having mysteries laid open a despicable side of human nature. Intelligent curiosity makes the American periodical possible.

But how many other kinds of article-themes soever we may catch and label—and I have only begun the list—each one must be infused with one big interest: HUMAN in-

terest. Are we absorbed in geology, it is because man stands somewhere in the background. Ants that war like human armies, rivers stored to make fertile the fields of man, ships that make and mar national careers—a myriad forms of things appeal to us because of their relationships to man and his vaulting aims. We must come close home to our readers so that each may say, "Ah, that touches *my* life!" Analyze the popular article and see how nearly it touches the recreations, the industries, the homes, and the prospective welfare of the middle class. Talk to a man about himself and he will listen.

In choosing the thing to write about we should have in mind the sort of magazine that prints such material—we must write for men and women in a definite plane. This, however, will not limit the market so definitely as might at first appear. Scan the list of titles and themes on pages 74 to 77 and note that even specialized magazines use articles not only of a very general sort, but also of a specialized type seemingly quite remote from their own specialty. In making an abstruse thing plain you reach both up and down. Nevertheless, it is most important to keep in view a definite market. This advice takes on added force when you consider technical, professional and trades journals.

Probably the reason why so wide a diversity of subjects is to be found in even specialized periodicals lies chiefly in the editor's wish to avoid the monotony of too much shop talk, but when he does go aside from his path he is, or ought to be, careful to preserve one quality: *unity of tone in all that he prints*. His magazine has not only a field but a

character. Your father admitted to your home many different friends—but he saw to it that each measured up to his standard, or their welcome was quietly cancelled.

Tone is a subtle thing, well worth studying. Many an article rejected by one group of magazines has been changed to harmonize with the tone of one in a diametrical group and met with instant acceptance. To preserve this personality, this tone, is a big part of the editorial duty. It is difficult to say precisely how *Collier's* differs in tone—I do not say in aims—from *The Metropolitan*, but it does, and unless you prefer to write and submit your articles hit-or-miss it will be well worth trying to *sense* that difference even if you cannot express it precisely. Perhaps, however, this illustration is unfortunate—it is better not to begin by submitting articles to magazines that buy most of their non-fictional material by arrangement with prominent writers. Don't despise an apprenticeship. Careers, like skyscrapers, are begun in the cellar. If you think you are the exception, go ahead and find out.

The following list of articles should be suggestive of present-day needs. Notice how the titles in almost every instance index the probable contents; how little trickery of phrasing there is in the titles; how either the informational or the practical note sounds constantly; how timeliness is to the fore; and how that many of the titles make you feel that you would like to know something about, or more of, that subject, according to your tastes.

Again, note the proportion of information-articles to pure human-interest material. Let me repeat that the magazine writer is constantly peering at us to discover the

things that affect our lives—our business, our reading, our play, our journeys, our beliefs, our sympathies. What he has done for us we must do for others. That is the big lesson as we read what has been written.

FIFTY TYPICAL SUBJECTS AND TITLES OF MAGAZINE ARTICLES

1. Get Ready for 5,000,000 Automobiles. Critical street problems which are arising with the revolution in transportation. Frederick Upham Adams, *American.*
2. Frontier Cities of Italy. Florence Craig Albright, *National Geographic.*
3. Helping Crippled Soldiers. Howard C. Felton, *Munsey.*
4. Eastertide in Old Seville. Mabel Clendenning FitzGerald, *Book News Monthly.*
5. America and Americans in Recent German Fiction. Harvey W. Thayer, *Bookman.*
6. Edwin Markham's Poetic Method. Henry Meade Bland, *Writer's Monthly.*
7. A Film Newspaper in the Making. Alfred A. Cohn, *Photoplay Magazine.*
8. War Scenes that Never Happened. Photoplays of War. Edward C. Crossman, *Illustrated World.*
9. Why are My Photographs a Failure? O. L. Griffith, *Ladies' Home Journal.*
10. George Bernard Shaw: An Impression. Daniel A. Lord, S. J., *Catholic World.*

11. PINCHED IN POLAND. A wartime experience. John Reed, *Metropolitan.*

12. THE RIGHT USE OF BOOKS. Laura Spencer Porter, *Woman's Home Companion.*

13. HORACE: AN APPRECIATION. Charles Newton Smiley, *Educational Review.*

14. WORDS AND THEIR USES. Emma Miller Bolenius, *McCall's.*

15. THE PSYCHOLOGY OF SPEED AND ACCURACY IN TYPEWRITING. M.N.Bunker, *American Penman.*

16. SNOW SHOES—HOW TO USE AND SELL THEM. C. L. Gilman, *Sporting Goods Dealer.*

17. TENNIS COURTS OF CONCRETE. J. N. Moyer, *Countryside.*

18. THE CONSERVATION OF SCENERY. Albert M. Turner, *Fra.*

19. DYNAMITE MAKERS. Willard Fay, *Collier's.*

20. FARM CREDITS. William C. Brown, *National.*

21. CONSTRUCTIVE PREPAREDNESS. Edward H. Smith, *McClure's.*

22. KINDERGARTEN TRAINING FOR THE COLT. E. Paige Loomis, *Country Life in America.*

23. THE KING AND QUEEN OF BELGIUM. A. E. P. B. Weigall, *Delineator.*

24. AMERICA AND JAPAN. Baron Eiichi Shibusawa, *Century.*

25. A ROYAL WEDDING IN WAR-TIME. The Marriage of Her Royal Highness Marie-Louise d'Orleans and Prince Philippe de Bourbon, *Harper's Bazaar.*

26. What is Music? Thomas Whitney Surette, *Atlantic Monthly.*
27. Hunting the Gobbler in Florida. R. N. Burne, *Outdoor Life.*
28. School Credits for Home Work. Charles P. Clark, *Mother's Magazine.*
29. Capt. Sally Tompkins, C. S. A. Emma Look Scott, *Southern Woman's Magazine.*
30. Confessions of a Peace Pilgrim. Helen Ring Robinson (member of the Ford Peace Expedition), *Independent.*
31. The Charm of New Orleans. Ernest Peixotto, *Scribner's.*
32. How I Doctor Sick Hotels. J. C. Wilbraham, *National Sunday Magazine.*
33. Russia's Contribution to the War. Stanley Washburn, *Review of Reviews.*
34. Mr. Carnegie and his Peace Flock. Gerald Stanley Lee, *Everybody's.*
35. How Rich is America? Albert W. Atwood, *Saturday Evening Post.*
36. What Can We Do About the Business Death Rate? (Failures in business). Stanley A. Dennis, *System.*
37. Italy and Servian Aid. Gino C. Speranza, *Outlook.*
38. The New Head of Tuskegee. Ray Stannard Baker, *World's Work.*
39. In Time of War Preparing for Peace. Mark S. Watson, *Canada Monthly.*

40. Feeding Belgium. Horace Fletcher, *Physical Culture.*
41. Sound Methods of Preparedness. A symposium gathered by George Creel, *Hearst's.*
42. Meeting Potash Shortage. C. A. LeClair, *Successful Farming.*
43. The Making of a Submarine Mine. John Randolph Rexford, *Popular Science Monthly.*
44. Isolde at Home. The real life of a prima donna. Johanna Gadski, *Woman's Home Companion.*
45. Fighting the Storm King (Snow). E. L. Bacon, *Railroad's Man's Magazine.*
46. Some Labor Lessons from Germany. Frederic C. Howe, *Pearson's.*
47. Adrianople Between Wars. H. G. Dwight, *Harper's.*
48. The Heredity Bugaboo. H. Addington Bruce, *Pictorial Review.*
49. The Birthplace of the Motion Picture. H. C. Peterson, *Sunset.*
50. The Fallacy of Grief. Maurice Maeterlinck, *Cosmopolitan.*

2. Opening the Article

One never tires of quoting Professor Barrett Wendell's witty remark: "Most people have a very strong impulse to preface something in particular by at least a paragraph of nothing in particular, bearing to the real matter in hand a relation not more inherently intimate than that of the tuning of violins to a symphony. It is the mechanical

misfortune of musicians that they cannot with certainty tune their instruments out of hearing. It is the mechanical luck of the writer that he need not show a bit more of his work than he chooses." [1]

See how in the following examples the introductions actually introduce, or else the author plunges without ceremony into what he has to say. Each of these is taken from *Munsey's Magazine* for April, 1916. I have chosen a single issue for two reasons: this periodical stands midway between the highly literary journal and the newer, flippant magazine of more cleverness than solidity; and also because the articles whose openings are here given vary widely in both tone and appeal. Note, however, the *current* interest of each subject, as suits the aim of this periodical.

THE STORY OF ENGLAND
By Nicholas Brenton

At the outbreak of the present war, when the British alliance with Russia was stigmatized in Germany as a piece of "racial disloyalty," it was retorted in England that the complaint illustrated that pedantic antiquarianism which is a marked feature of the German mind. By thus drawing attention to the undisputed origins of the English people, Germany only emphasized the more the striking manner in which races originally one have developed away from each other, till differentiation has made of them nations which to-day seem indeed to have little in common save that far-away beginning.

To-day the cousinship is so distant that they have practically ceased to be of the same family; for, while the German has remained German, the modern Englishman seems no more a German than he seems a Frenchman. Yet when England first

[1] *English Composition.*

began to be England, with the Anglo-Saxon subjugation of the imperfectly Romanized Britain, "it was," in Green's phrase, "the one purely German nation that rose upon the wreck of Rome." The chemistry of the subsequent change is as mysterious as that of all other racial transmutations.

In this real introduction our general interest in current happenings is used to awaken a special interest in the history of England. At the same time, the opening reference serves as a logical point of departure for the writer to show *how* the English became a unique nation.

THE HAVOC OF INVASION

A BROAD TRAIL OF RUIN THROUGH FIVE FAIR PROVINCES OF FRANCE

By J. W. McConaughy

War, observed the late Charles Reade, has ever been against the solid interests of mankind. But in past centuries, in the dynastic wars of which Europe has seen so many, its record of wanton destructiveness was comparatively negligible.

The article itself is really an elaboration of the thesis found in the second sentence of the introduction. It shows by contrast the destruction wrought in France today. This form of thesis-introduction is one of the best.

OUR TURBULENT HOUSE

LEGISLATORS WHO NEVER ARE IN ORDER, AND PROBABLY NEVER WILL BE

By Horace Towner

When the Sixty-Fourth Congress, which we now have with us, had completed the preliminaries of organization, Champ Clark took his place behind the Speaker's desk, brought his gavel down

with a resounding whack, and roared, in exactly the same tone and inflection with which he had used the same phrase several thousand times before: "The House will be in order!" (Whack!)

But the House wouldn't be in order. It never has been in order, and probably it never will be. Not even the majestic presence and leonine roar of Speaker Champ Clark can repress that restless body.

It must be admitted that Mr. Clark does his best.

Here we have a chatty, journalistic opening which advertises at once that a light tone will be adopted. The easy narrative of historic scenes of turbulency in Congress bears out the opening impression.

THE POLITICAL TRUCE IN CANADA

HOW THE DOMINION HAS SET PATRIOTISM ABOVE PARTY IN THE CRISIS OF A GREAT WAR

When we of the United States speak of "a bitter political fight," we usually have at the back of our minds the late Tilden-Hayes unpleasantness, or Lincoln's first campaign for the Presidency. Compared with the political battles of our brother Anglo-Saxon nations, our ordinary electoral campaigns are about as bitter as ice-cream soda.

This unsigned article also uses the journalistic opening. It employs the popular method of appealing to knowledge so as to find a basis for comparison.

WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE

AND THE THREE HUNDREDTH ANNIVERSARY OF HIS DEATH

By Richard Le Gallienne

If we attempt to formulate at its broadest and simplest our feeling as we think of Shakespeare, our most inclusive emotion as

his name springs involuntarily to our lips, I believe that we shall find it to be that of an immense kindness toward him. Leaving aside our wonder and reverence at the manifold operations of his genius, his intellect, his imagination, his power of poetic expression, we think first of the quality that with such large ease included all these attributes—his boundless humanity.

He is the greatest of all poets, because he was the most human of all human beings as well. He is our supreme authority on human nature. We do not think of Dante, nor even of Homer, in that way. Other poets may be inaccessible mountain peaks, or even star-mantled mountain ranges. Shakespeare alone is a continent. Humanity is in need of all its poets can give it, but its greatest need in its interpreters is—humanity.

The value of this somewhat oratorical opening lies in the fact that it sounds the key note of the article, which, while not new in matter, is timely enough to serve as an interest-arousing theme.

PREPAREDNESS—OF A NEW KIND

By Franklin K. Lane

UNITED STATES SECRETARY OF THE INTERIOR

Some months ago I sought to learn what I could of the assets of this country as they might be revealed by the Department of the Interior. I desired to find just where we were in point of development, and what we had with which to meet the world; for we were learning that war is no longer a set contest between more or less mobile armies, but an enduring contest between all the life-forces of the contending parties—their financial strength, their industrial organization and adaptability, their crop yields, and their mineral resources. Ultimately, indeed, it comes to a test of the very genius of the peoples involved.

To mobilize an army, even a great army, is now no more than an idle evidence of a single form of strength, if behind this army the nation is not organized.

This is another thesis-introduction, the last half of which is immeasurably better than the former.

THE METRIC SYSTEM

THE INCREASING PROSPECT OF ITS ADOPTION IN THE UNITED STATES

By Judson C. Welliver

Pounds and ounces, gallons and quarts, tons and hundredweight, miles and yards, feet and inches, acres and square feet, are making ready for their exit from the stage of American business affairs.

Truth to say, they have had no good excuse for lingering with us so long. They ought to have been lifted out on the toe of the legislative boot long ago. They are confusing, obsolete, unscientific, and calculated to demoralize all commercial transactions measured in their terms. Their continued existence as the standards of weight and measurement in American business is a testimony to our national conservatism, and to the overpowering inertia that so often prevents the accomplishment of things which everybody knows ought to be done.

This is a most effective introduction for this sort of article, which, as may be guessed, is positive and uncompromising in tone.

FOUR FAMOUS AMERICAN OCTOGENARIANS

A QUARTET OF VETERANS WHO AT MORE THAN FOURSCORE YEARS ARE STILL USEFUL AND ACTIVE CITIZENS

To Henri Frédéric Amiel, the Swiss philosopher whose "Journal Intime" has gained a posthumous celebrity, we owe this profound observation:

To know how to grow old is the master-work of wisdom, and one of the most difficult chapters in the great art of living.

This is a truth heartily indorsed by elderly gentlemen of ex-

perience and by younger men of imagination. And herewith are the portraits of four well-known Americans who have conspicuously achieved their "master-work."

This unsigned light article is well introduced. The suggestions of pleasant eulogy and none-too-critical consideration are carried out.

Only let the opening be striking enough to command attention, suggestive enough to arouse expectation, fitting enough to match the theme, and pitched in a key low enough to make interest climacteric, and the writer may open in the way that pleases him best. But with all his will let him resolve to get started quickly.

3. The Body of the Article

Well-bred articles keep their skeletons concealed, yet the bony structure is none the less valuable.

Having it clearly in mind that in no circumstances must the framework stick out, the writer had better learn to outline his article before beginning the actual writing. Each thought he wishes to elaborate might well be jotted on a slip of paper. If there are a group of distinctly subordinate thoughts under any one of the main thoughts, these should be set down, perhaps on the same slips that contain the major thoughts. When the main thoughts have been recorded, and also the subsidiary ideas under their appropriate main headings, spread out the slips of paper like so many cards in a game. Consider carefully the thought with which to open, which ought to follow, and which should end the article. Climax, or rising interest, is a

natural order. "End with words that deserve distinction"—Dr. Wendell's wise saying bears repetition; but first be sure that the thought is worthy of the words.

Throughout the entire process of writing keep your outline before you so as to give due proportion to each thought.

Since the present work is a manual of instruction, and emphasis on each point is important, it has been thought best to make most of the bones to show. Examine, then, the skeleton of this chapter to see how section is added to section, and how any one section includes a number of contributory ideas which amplify the major thought. But so formal an arrangement for a magazine article would be very bad indeed, even in the average educational journal. Freedom, ease, and charm would be entirely killed by this method. Study the chatty way in which the lighter articles in our best magazines are handled. Even dialogue is introduced, and the information slipped to the reader in a style anything but dogmatic. True, the more serious articles are more sober, yet our brighter essayists are never heavy, and a flash of wit, if the match be not struck too frankly, is rarely out of place. The magazine writer must not *seem* to instruct.

The whole thing may be summed up in a word: Know where you are going, map out the route, mark each stage mentally but not too openly, then go to your destination with as light and swift a step as you can. And don't get lost.

4. The Length of the Article

The memory of the Rev. Charles H. Spurgeon is revered

by multitudes, but his popularity would be greater if everyone knew his declaration that "a short prayer is long enough if it reach God."

One might fill a long chapter in praising brevity. But what is the answer to the question: How long should a magazine article be? The best answer is the only answer—much the same as that of the boy who when asked by his teacher, "How long should the legs of a well-porportioned man be?" replied, "Long enough to reach the ground, sir."

There are, of course, definite requirements of space with different magazines, and these standards are not the expressions of an editor's whim but grow out of the need for a full and well-varied table of contents, and, in many instances, from the exigencies of fitting articles with illustrations. But after all, the question is usually this—is the article a major or a minor one? If the former, it will justify the allotment of more space than if it were of only secondary importance. The major, or leading, articles will therefore average more words than the grand average shows in the examination now to be reported.

This study of a large number of well-known magazines has been, for the purpose of showing a wide range of kinds, narrowed to forty-five. In each instance the examination covered three numbers—issued, almost without exception, in 1916.

The short prefatory Note shows why the conclusions reached may be taken as representative of present-day editorial demands with regard to the number of words in the full-length magazine article. One thousand words is

not an arbitrary dividing line set between the short article and the long, for in actual practice it marks a reasonable division—short articles average considerably less than one thousand words and the full-length product a great many more.

AVERAGE LENGTH OF ARTICLES IN THREE ISSUES EACH OF FORTY-FIVE MAGAZINES

NOTE: So as not to include editorials, unsigned staff material, department material, and very short articles or "fillers," only signed articles of at least one thousand words were counted as being "full-length articles."

Name of Magazine	Number of Articles in Three Issues	Words in the Longest Article	Average Length
Scribner's	12	8800	6110
Harper's	18	7200	5622
Atlantic	37	8000	5492
Everybody's	8	9000	5131
Pearson's	19	6800	4700
Munsey	15	10000	4260
Saturday Evening Post	13	7400	4250
Century	14	7300	4221
Metropolitan	9	7200	4106
Collier's	8	5900	3975
North American Review	30	7000	3870
World's Work	33	6200	3479
Travel	15	7400	3422
Review of Reviews	27	8000	3415
Cosmopolitan	6	6000	3371

Name of Magazine	Number of Articles in Three Issues	Words in the Longest Article	Average Length
Good Housekeeping	16	4900	3328
Bookman	18	7000	3261
McClure's	9	7900	3200
Mothers'	25	5000	3120
System	44	4900	2666
Bellman	8	3750	2620
Southern Woman's	19	5600	2620
St. Nicholas	10	4300	2485
McCall's	16	3850	2484
Yachting	12	3750	2358
Delineator	11	5300	2441
Outlook	20	4400	2440
Outing	26	6800	2385
Woman's Home Companion	18	4000	2330
Hearst's	8	3700	2325
American	18	4500	2282
Physical Culture	25	5600	2236
Overland	22	5300	2218
Ladies' Home Journal	20	4000	2085
Independent	15	3500	1960
Canada Monthly	11	3000	1863
Designer	9	3500	1862
Pictorial Review	7	3000	1800
Theatre	23	4000	1800
Christian Endeavor World	4	2700	1800
Popular Science Monthly	27	3400	1800
House and Garden	27	3050	1606
Motor	16	2100	1572
Writer's Monthly	21	2500	1414
Country Life in America	16	2500	1300

It will be seen that magazines whose articles average more than 4000 words bring up the grand average materially. In fact, twenty-three of the forty-five magazines reported on, average less than 2500 words for each article, and eleven magazines average less than 2000 words.

This preference for short material is further emphasized by the fact that many of these magazines also use a considerable number of really short articles. For example, while three issues of *Cosmopolitan* contain only six full-length articles, the same numbers carry three short ones; *Country Life in America* prints eleven very short articles in addition to its sixteen longer pieces; *Hearst's* gives six short pieces in addition to eight of full length; while *The Christian Endeavor World* uses more short than long contributions. The longest article contains 10,000 words; the shortest, 1000; and the average length of 805 articles in 135 issues (3 each) of forty-five magazines is 2962 words—substantially, 3000.

For the foregoing and other equally obvious reasons writers ought to conclude that only in the most exceptional instances would they be justified in offering articles of the maximum length used. It is surely the part of prudence to keep within the average, to say nothing of the extreme.

5. *Ending the Article*

If the old-fashioned introduction has gone out of style, much more so has the afore-time wind-up. Indeed, those who look—generally in vain—for literary form in the modern magazine often complain that the usual article of

today ends with more promptness than is pleasing. However this may be as a matter of good taste, the writer faces "not a theory but a condition." Editors do not want any farewells or final flourishes which, if retained, might cause an article to run over to a new page, whereas a—it is to be hoped—judicious use of the blue pencil will save that embarrassment and make an article end where the real thought stops. A single concise summary—packed into one clear sentence, if possible—or an epigrammatic tone-sentence, is all that should be allowed.

GUIDE POSTS FOR THE WRITER OF ARTICLES

Ask innumerable questions and be satisfied with no shallow answers.

Consider your subject in its relationships of comparison and contrast.

Do not insist on the obvious, nor prove the proved.

Do not be content with stating facts—vitalize your facts with ideas.

Look into the past, the present and the future of your subject, but do not try to tell it all.

If the interest-point does not lie in the cause, seek for it in the effect—and contrariwise.

Think and ask and plan before you read; and do all three before you write.

Inference and suggestion are invaluable literary devices; not everything must be baldly told.

Simplicity is the hall-mark of knowledge; one is rarely profound when he is elaborate.

Humor is a saving grace, solemnity a cardinal sin—but don't confuse triviality with lightness.

Pomposity will kill more live ideas than crudeness.

QUESTIONS AND EXERCISES

1. Without attempting a formal definition, what do you understand by (a) a newspaper feature article? (b) a full-length magazine article?

2. Realizing that the types coincide at some points, in what respects do they usually differ?

3. Set down as many subjects for magazine articles as occur to you after a few minutes' thinking.

4. Consider the list and strike out those that seem unavailable, but do not do so without being able to say why on second thought you reject them.

5. Can any of the rejected themes be used after modifying them by variation, addition, or division?

6. Try to add to the list of fundamental things to write about named on pages 70 and 71.

7. To which of these classes does each of your themes (question 3) belong? One may belong to several.

8. What is "interest?" Illustrate.

9. What is "human interest?" Illustrate.

10. Try to develop two subjects out of your answers to questions 8 and 9.

11. From a magazine select an article which does not seem to come within the avowed scope of that periodical, yet which has some justification for its inclusion. Try to show why, in a very few words.

12. Try to express in two short sentences the respective tones of two divergent magazines.

13. To what sort of people does each appeal?

14. Which is the larger class?

15. On which of the subjects listed on pages 74 to 77 are you prepared to write, either by present knowledge or by opportunities for research?

16. Criticise any objectionable opening quoted in this chapter.

17. Amend it.

18. Criticise the opening of any article from any magazine.

19. Amend it.

20. After some thought, enlarge the list of subjects called for in question 3.

21. Write original openings for any two.

22. Analyze, as this chapter is outlined, any suitable magazine article.

23. Make an outline of any article you have already written—published or unpublished.

24. Build an outline for an article you propose to write, giving the introduction complete.

25. For what magazines ought it to be suitable? Why?

26. Criticise the ending of any magazine article.

27. Amend it.

28. Write your own article complete.

CHAPTER VIII

HUMOROUS WRITING

There is no technique of humor as there is of verse, for its forms are as various as life. The writer who needs to be told what is humor and what is not was born without a certain useful bone. He may lament its absence but he can never supply it by much study and analysis. He who possesses it may, of course, cultivate it to sensitiveness. The most humorous mind, however, may be at a loss to understand in what the mirthful consists. Yet, obviously, the purpose of this chapter is not to teach the unhumorous to write humor; less still is it to announce and expound a philosophy of wit and humor. The object of this particular study is in harmony with the avowed purpose of the entire handbook—to examine theories only so far as they are necessary to more successful practice. What, therefore, will be attempted now is this: to seek quickly for the ultimate basis of the comic so that we may, by an examination of the several types of humorous writing—taken chiefly from contemporary magazines and papers—see how an endless variety of witty and humorous effects may be built on this one foundation.

One other preliminary disclaimer seems necessary. After we shall have examined the basis of all mirthful notions and seen their limits, no set attempt will be made to discriminate between wit and humor, either in theory or in the illustrative examples, for in many cases the

two forms merge—though in others they are distinct enough.

Now these two disavowals of purpose must not be taken to mean that it is anything other than important and valuable to the finished student of humor to understand the philosophy of mirth in all its moods and tenses. I merely say that for him there are other books—as may be seen in the reading list given in Appendix D. For ages, philosophers, from Aristotle and Plato to Sully and Bergson, have been tackling the problem, though most of them have been more keen in pointing out *what* is funny than in explaining *why* it is funny.

To know the causes of the laughable—and now I include all forms of wit and humor, from pleasantry, facetiousness, word-play, repartee, irony, sarcasm, derision and the sardonic, through comedy, farce, burlesque and extravaganza, to whatever other types the Proteus of fun may assume—is to have taken a long step toward facility in shaping mirthful ideas for the market. Therefore to that inquiry we turn first.

1. The Basis of the Laughable

As has been said, a great many attempts have been made to segregate the comic germ. "Incongruity," "descending incongruity," "degradation," "nullified expectation," "inelasticity," the presence of "something mechanical in something living"—all these and yet others have been put forward as being what Bergson has aptly called the *leit motif* of the comic. To be sure, the pro-

ponents of their several theories expand and explain these words in such a way as to show them to lie much closer to the heart of the laughable than at first appears. Yet it has seemed to me that the writer of humor may find more help and, if I may venture to say so, a more definitive statement in fuller words, something like this:

The basis of the comic lies in some variation from the normal or the expected, sufficient to produce an effect either incongruous or surprisingly apt, yet not sufficient to excite any serious feeling.

Single examples or even many examples are not enough to warrant a generalization. The only way to measure the validity of the foregoing statement is to bring it, part by part, to the test of actual humor of all known kinds. This, obviously, is impracticable here, so we must be content with a brief examination of the dictum in detail.

The idea of (*a*) *variation* inheres in all humor—a broken rope, a stumble, a change of mind, a sudden reversal in the flow of ideas, a shift from the figurative to the literal, or the serious to the trivial, or the mental to the bodily. Examples will arise to infinity. A perfectly straight course pursued normally by a normal being to the end and without interruption can never be funny. Indeed, it can not be even interesting, as readers of plotless novels constantly find out.

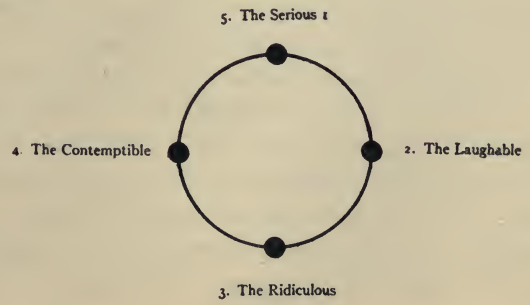
(*b*) *Unexpected variation* is another quality which inheres in the humorous—that is, it must be unexpected to the victim, and sometimes also to the spectator, though the very essence of the comic may lie in seeing the victim

march blithely on to his prepared Waterloo—"A School for Scandal" furnished a historic instance.

But (*c*) *the extent of the variation* from the normal, or the expected—for not all expected outcomes are normal—governs the humorous absolutely. Here we must note three things: The variation must be sufficient to produce something (1) **incongurous**—like a wild clutching at a support that is not reachable; or (2) **surprisingly apt**—as the retort in the time-worn pun: "I fell notwithstanding;" yet (3) **not sufficient to produce a serious feeling,** like that of righteous anger, or pity, or deep contempt.

Good sense is at once the basis of and the limit to all humor. He who lacks a fine perception of "the difference between what things are and what they ought to be," as the always-to-be-quoted Hazlitt expressed it, can never write humor. All the way through we shall find that mirth is a matter of relationships, of shift, of rigidity trying to be flexible, of something shocked into something else.

Let us think of a circle on which four points have been marked:



Beginning with a serious idea, we may swiftly step from point to point until we return to the serious, with only slight variations from the original conception. Take the perennial comedy-theme of the impish collar, and visualize the scenes:

1. A man starts to button his collar. Nothing is less comical, so long as the operation proceeds normally.

2. But the button is too large and his efforts begin to exasperate him, with the result that his expression and movements become incongruous. We see, and laugh—though he does not.

3. He begins to hop around in a mad attempt to button the unbuttonable, and soon rips off the collar, addressing it in unparliamentary language. He is ludicrous, ridiculous, absurd.

4. In his rage he violently kicks a pet dog that comes wagging up to him. Our laughter subsides, for the fellow is more contemptible than amusing—a deeper feeling has been born in us.

5. The little dog limps off with a broken leg—we are no longer amused, we are indignant. What is more, not only have we gotten back to the serious, but there is no amusement left in any of the previous scenes.

Still applying the test of the *extent* of the variation from the normal as shown in the effects, we conclude that **serious consequences kill humor.** The mere *idea* of such consequences, when we know that in the circumstances they are really impossible, may convulse us with merriment, as when we see a comedian jab a long finger into the mouth of his teammate and the latter chews it

savagely. In real life this might sicken us with disgust—I say "might," because we can easily conceive of such a situation's exciting laughter if the victim were well deserving of the punishment. It is human for us to laugh when the biter is bit; indeed, variations on this theme are endless in humorous writing.

Sympathy also kills humor. The moment that we begin to pity the victim of a joke—for humor has much to do with victims—our laughter dies away. Therefore the subject of the joke must not be one for whose distress we feel strong sympathy. The thing that happens to a fop is quite different in effect from that which affects a sweet old lady. True, we often laugh at those—or at those ideas—with whom or with which we are in sympathy, but in such an instance the ludicrous for the moment overwhelms our sympathy—and sometimes even destroys it.

Once let an editor feel that we are lacking in justice, humanity, sympathy, generosity, and a sense of what is right, and our supposed jest is rejected. It requires the good sense which we have seen lying beneath the idea of the comic to know what subjects to let alone when jesting, for it is idle to say that we may not make fun with serious matters. We are constantly doing so, and doing so most usefully, for too much reverence is the foe of progress. It is in itself funny to be too serious. The inexcusable thing is to turn serious or sacred matters to ridicule without thereby enforcing a counter truth which has been neglected.

The political cartoon furnishes an example in point. The drawing may serve to elevate the true presidential idea by depicting a bumptious chief executive as trying to

sit down on Uncle Sam, whereas it would be mere vilification to picture him as spitting on Congress. We respect the judiciary, yet it might be ludicrous to see a judge paying more attention to a legal precedent than to the working of justice, and it would be a mild and wholesome corrective for society to laugh such a judge out of his folly.

Serious matters pressed to extremes thus lend themselves to humor, but more to wit, which laughs *at* the victim, not *with* him, as often has been said; for wit is a rapier, while humor is the wind that may sting without wounding. When Mark Twain says of a certain character, "He was a good man, though he was a clergyman," we chuckle at his wit, whether we sympathize much or little with the clergy as a class. The sly innuendo makes a sudden break in a normal course of the thought, with a resultant idea which is either incongruous or surprisingly apt—according to our viewpoint. When a wag said that Phillips Brooks was "an Episcopalian with a leaning toward Christianity" he may have been unjust to the Bishop, to the Church, or to Christianity—or to all or to none. The witty remark nevertheless sets one to thinking toward a conclusion suitable to his own temper.

When looking for laughter-provoking material it is well to remember that there are

2. *Six Kinds of Humor*

Under these general groups all mirthful notions may be grouped:

(a) *Form*, as a funny face.

(b) *Movement*, as ludicrous gestures.

(c) *Situation*, as a fat man treed by a playful but seemingly fierce dog.

(d) *Character*, as an absent-minded scholar.

(e) *Idea*, as when Mark Twain said, "Be good and you will be lonesome."

(f) *Word*, as: He was a virtuous rogue, with damnably good habits.

It is plain at once that all these sorts freely interpenetrate. In the briefest forms of humorous writings they of course are seen singly, yet when two or more are combined we find the humor increasing. The man of funny face will, let us say, move comically, get into laughable situations, and reveal his oddities of character by his ludicrous ideas and his droll words—here we have the six forms combined.

3. The Common Types of Humorous Writing

(a) *The Epigram* is a bright thought compacted into a single detached sentence—the briefer the better. Wit is its body, and sting is in its tail. Satire, irony, even the sardonic, chooses the epigram for its own.

The epigram may be sold singly or in related groups, and occasionally epigrammatists like Minna Thomas Antrim attain to book publication. Mrs. Antrim's epigrams make up at least a dozen bright little volumes.[1]

Antithesis, the witty revelation of an unsuspected likeness, and sudden contrast, are the bases of most epigrams,

[1] Most of them are published by Altemus, Philadelphia.

as when Dr. C. H. Parkhurst thus opened the famous sermon in which he paid his respects to Tammany Hall:

> The wicked flee when no man pursueth, but they make better time when someone is after them.

The foregoing example also illustrates a common epigrammatic form—the expanded aphorism. Here is a more recent example from *Puck:*

COMPENSATION

> A rolling stone gathers no moss, but it gets so smooth that nobody has anything on it.

Akin to this type is this twisted aphorism from *Life:*

> Talkers rush in where thinkers fear to tread.

The most difficult epigram, however, and probably the most salable, is the purely original quip:

> It is hard lines to hear a witty fellow say the very thing you have been trying to say.—*Lippincott's.*

(b) *The Anecdote* is a short incident illustrating a definite point, told of a real or a fictitious person.[1] Its humor is chiefly that of character and of situation. Two hundred words may safely be taken as its extreme of length, and if the story can be compressed within one hundred, it is by so much the better.

[1] Professor Henri Bergson in his valuable essay, *Laughter*, has called attention to the fact that all humor has to do with human beings. "Several have defined man as 'an animal which laughs.' They might equally well have defined him as an animal which is laughed at; for if any other animal, or some lifeless object, produces the same effect, it is always because of some resemblance to man, of the stamp he gives it or the use he puts it to."

It is a fashion nowadays to concoct or even revamp anecdotes and attach to them the names of persons in the public eye. If the story is a good one the alleged originator does not rise to object. Doubtless many a stodgy statesman has in this way passed for a wit.

Four vital things must be kept in mind by anecdote writers:

(1) Not one word may be wasted in preliminaries not absolutely needed to lay the foundation for the point. (2) The preliminaries must not give away the point. (3) The surprising point must come suddenly. (4) The point must be so good that it will upon reflection justify the preliminaries.

A pointless anecdote is not an anecdote, it is a bore.

THE BEST COURSE

At the Lambs Club one night a player whose conceit is in inverse ratio to his ability was complaining to William Collier that, by reason of the curious hostility of the critics, he was unable to obtain a lucrative engagement.

"What do they say?" asked Collier.

"That's just it—they don't say anything about me. I tell you there is a conspiracy of silence against me. What would you do?"

"Join it," advised Collier.—*Lippincott's.*

TOO GOOD TO BE WASTED

A lady of great beauty and attractiveness, who was an ardent admirer of Ireland, once crowned her praise of it at a party by saying:

"I think I was meant for an Irishwoman."

"Madam," rejoined a witty son of Erin, "thousands would back me in saying you were meant for an Irishman."—*Tit-Bits.*

Besides being examples of pure wit, the foregoing anecdotes are told in what may be called the *simple* style. Here is one which is in the *compound* form:

The son of Professor Ormond, of Oxford, was about to be married, and father and son had come to the door of their home to greet the groomsman, who was arriving from London. Just as the young man reached the top step he slipped and fell.

"Why, my boy, that's too bad! How did you come to fall?" asked the professor anxiously.

"By Jove, Sir, I didn't come to fall," laughed the young man, "I came to stand up with your son."

The professor was so much tickled by the retort that he told the incident next day at the Faculty Club. "That young beggar is witty," said he. "When I asked him how he came to fall, what do you think he said? 'Jove, Sir,' said he, 'I didn't intend to fall at all—I came to be your son's groomsman.' Ah—Eh—or words to that effect."

If you purpose writing anecdotes it would be quite worth while to make cuttings of a number of anecdotes so as to study the various ways in which they are told. The variety of devices used to bring out the point effectively may prove not only surprising but helpful in suggesting new styles for story-telling. Manner is as important here as matter. A few cleverly told anecdotes begin at the beginning; most do not; but all good ones end at the end. If you feel like adding a moral or a homily, don't. It is far better to suggest your lesson, if you have one, and let the climax of the story drive home the point, as in the following from *Lippincott's:*

THE HOBOES NEED A UNION

A man who insists upon starting his "help" to work too early in the mornings is justly an object of suspicion.

Last summer a Connecticut farmer was approached by a tramp who asked for something to eat and a night's lodging. It was pretty well toward evening and the work was all done, so the farmer gave the man his supper and sent him to the barn to sleep, with the understanding that the hobo was to be called next morning in time to work out his "keep."

About half-past three the farmer routed him out.

"What's all this, boss?" murmured the tramp, rubbing his eyes.

"Time to get up and work."

"What doing?"

"We're going to reap."

"Reap what?"

"Oats."

"Are they wild oats, boss?"

"Wild oats? No, of course not. Why?"

"Well, boss, if they ain't wild oats, why do you have to sneak up on 'em like this in the dark?"

(c) *Various Forms of Short Jests.* Here I shall want to give many more examples illustrating different kinks in the laughable than are cited under the headings preceding and following, for the reason that the short joke or jest admits of expansion in so many instances that the same basis of variation from the normal or the expected to the point of incongruity or surprising aptness will be found in the funny plot in comedy and fiction, and in the humorous article, as in the witticism and the joke. It will doubtless be enough in most instances to call attention to the form of the twist, without comment—and this solely for the purpose of stimulating invention, and distinctly not with the object of listing all the kinds of jests—for they are legion. Now and then time-worn jokes have been selected as being more typically exemplar than newer ones

—if such there be! Often one joke will serve to illustrate more than one twist.

Incongruous disparity between cause and effect

AN EXPLANATION

Thix wax the laxt article in thix ixxue to be xet up, and juxt ax the type xetter attacked it he broke the matrix for a certain letter. It ix not eaxy to xpecify it, but we may xay that it xtandx between *r* and *t* in the alphabet. He found an extra *x*, however, xo he xupplied the mixxing letter by making thix ridiculoux xubxtitution. Pleaxe excuxe thix embarraxxing xituation. It ix perhapx fortunate that we have no xpace to xay more.

Incongruity of paradox

The more I think of that man the less I think of him.

—*Charles Lamb.*

Incongruity from unreasonableness

When General D. McM. Gregg was asked to be a candidate for the Mayoralty of Reading, Pa., he said: "No, gentlemen, I can't—they would charge my father with being a horse thief; and the worst of it is that they would prove it."

Incongruity from sudden contrast

A timid mouse that lived in a cellar was in mortal fear of the huge house cat. One day the mouse chanced upon a wine barrel, leaking at the bung. She cautiously dipped one paw in the rich fluid, licked it, and then began to take notice. She dipped in the other paw, licked it, and felt more enthusiastic. After several more samples she rolled over and over in the pool of wine and licked herself off happily. Then suddenly she started up the cellar stairs, saying: "*Now* where the —— is that cat!"

Incongruity from transposed letters in words

A TRIAL OF FAITH

A pastor in western Pennsylvania, who until recently was a believer in the literal answer to prayer, is now, with some trepida-

tion, taking stock of his faith. Not long ago a visiting fellow-clergyman prayed fervently in his pulpit to this effect:

"May the brother who ministers to this flock be filled full of fresh veal and new zigor."

The startled pastor says that he doesn't object to fresh veal in moderation, but does object to having one of these new breakfast-foods forced upon him.—*Harper's Magazine.*

Incongruity from discovering needless effort

A woman wound her clock every night for nine years and then discovered that it was an eight-day clock.

Contrast this with the serious feeling one experiences on learning the dénouement of Maupassant's "The Necklace."

Incongruity of farcical tone

Enter Hamlet

POLONIUS: Your majesty, yonder comes Hamlet.

THE KING: Ah, he knows I croaked his old man!

—*Miss Hamlet.*

Incongruity from suddenly facing the impossible

"By ginger," said the farmer, "do the cheeky fellers that surveyed the new railroad right through my double barn think I'm a-goin' to stand out thar an' open an' shet the doors ev'ry time one o' their durn trains come along?"

Incongruity from suddenly facing the embarrassing or the improper

SHAME ON UNCLE!

BOBBY: "My Uncle Sam keeps squabs. Do you know what squabs are?"

TOMMY: "Yes, I do. It's what the Injuns call their wives."

BILLY: "No, 'tain't neither, it's what my Uncle Hen chases when he hunts in New York."

Incongruity from suddenly facing the unaccountable

A countryman, who had stood a long while facing a circus

poster showing a giraffe, suddenly turned away with the disgusted remark: "Shucks, there *ain't* no such animule!"

Incongruity of accumulated difficulties

TELLING HIM

SMALL BOY: "Good fishin'?" "Yes sir; ye go down that private road till ye come to th' sign 'Trespassers Will Be Prosecuted,' cross the field with th' bull in it an' you'll see a sign 'No Fishing Allowed'—that's it."—*Life.*

The surprise of fitness, or congruity

REASON ENOUGH

HAROLD: "What are you picking on me for? I didn't do anything!"

MICKEY: "Ye don't have t' do nuthin'. It's yer looks that gits me goat."—*Judge.*

The intentional twist of meaning

HIS HANDICAP

FIRST REPORTER: "Senator Bullyun must have been a bright baby."

SECOND REPORTER: "Why do you think so?"

FIRST REPORTER: "He told me in an interview that he began life as a schoolteacher."—*Indianapolis Star.*

The absent-minded blunder

OUT OF ORDER

PROVERBIAL ABSENT-MINDED PROFESSOR: "Goodness! That clock needs fixing. It just struck one, four times."

—*Harvard Lampoon.*

The blunder of presumptuous ignorance

SHARP EYES

FIRST LADY: "That's one of them Australian soldiers."

SECOND LADY: "How do you know?"

FIRST LADY: "Why, can't you see the kangaroo feathers in his hat?"—*Punch.*

The blunder of simple ignorance

TRUSTING

The violin was made in 1626 by Fecit Anno Domini. Proof of the date is to be seen on an age-worn paper inside of the case.

—*Valparaiso (Ind.) Vidette.*

The unintentional thrust

HE LOOKED IT

The governor's wife was telling Bridget about her husband.

"My husband, Bridget," she said proudly, "is the head of the state militia."

"Oi t'ought as much, ma'am," said Bridget cheerfully. "Ain't he got the foine malicious look?"—*Southern Woman's Magazine.*

The truth ignorantly spoken

JOHNNY (to his sister's admirer): "Say, Mr. Barton, I'd like to see you drink."

BARTON: "Why, Johnny?"

JOHNNY: "Brother says you drink like a fish."

The blunder from literalness

POLITE BUT FIRM

Mrs. N. was giving instructions to her new servant: "Before removing the soup-plates, Mary, always ask each person if he or she would like any more."

"Very good, madam."

Next day Mary, respectfully bowing to one of the guests, inquired, "Would the gentleman like some more soup?"

"Yes, please."

"There ain't any left."—*Chicago Journal.*

The blunder of simplicity

SPEEDING IT ON

The musketry-instructor had just been giving a lesson on the rifle to one particularly "green" set of recruits. At the end he asked: "Now, is there any question you want to ask?"

One dull-looking Johnny Raw stept forward, blushing awkwardly.

"Yes, my man?" said the instructor, encouragingly.

"Plaze, sor," stammered the searcher after knowledge, "is it roight that the harder Oi pull the trigger-thing the farder the bullet goes?"—*Tit-Bits.*

Naïve over-seriousness

GIRL PRAYING: "Excuse me, O Lord, there's the 'phone."

—*Life.*

Surprising obviousness, with local satire

HOW SHE DID IT

The latest Boston story is about a small child who fell out of a window. A kind-hearted lady came hurrying up with the anxious question, "Dear, dear! How did you fall?"

The child looked up at the questioner and replied, in a voice choked with sobs, "Vertically, ma'am."—*Tit-Bits.*

An unexpected truth

HE KNEW

"Do you know where the little boys go who don't put their Sunday School money in the plate?"

"Yes'm—to the movies."—*Williams Purple Cow.*

Transposed moral ideas

"Well, you did steal it, didn't you?"

"No! Do you think I'd sell my character for such a small sum!"

Anachronism of incidents

Bill Nye's "Comic History of the United States."

Surprise from lapse of memory

A clergyman was addressing an informal gathering at which the Bishop was present on the platform.

"My brethren," said the minister, "on this subject our good Bishop made a remark to me yesterday that I shall never forget. It impressed me most profoundly. He said——."

Then after a moment's painful hesitation he turned to the Bishop with an agonized stage-whisper: "For pity's sake, Bishop, what was that you said yesterday?"

Naïve inference

HIS AFFLICTION

A teacher had told a class of juvenile pupils that Milton, the poet, was blind. The next day she asked if any of them could remember what Milton's great affliction was. "Yes'm," replied one little fellow; "he was a poet."—*Argonaut.*

Unintentional inference from a mistake

WHY SOME MEN ARE SINGLE

A. O. Lundquist, who was married three weeks ago, is able to be out again and will likely be able to assume his duties as carpenter and contractor soon.—*The Montezuma (Colo.) Journal.*

Direct unexpected inference—double entendre

A HINT

STAGE-MANAGER: "My dear, I wish you would wear a different gown in the second act."

RITA RAVENYELP: "But that is the latest style, and I paid two hundred dollars for it."

STAGE-MANAGER: "That may be true, but when your husband says: 'Woman, you are hiding something from me,' the audience can't figure out what he means."—*Judge.*

Satirical inference

COURAGEOUS

"One wife too many!" exclaimed Mrs. Wederly, as she glanced at the headlines of her husband's paper. "I suppose that is an account of the doings of some bigamist?"

"Not necessarily, my dear," replied her husband, without daring to look up.—*Buffalo Courier.*

The rebuke by inference

SEXTON: "Dogs are not admitted here, sir."

VISITOR: "That's not my dog."

SEXTON: "Not your dog? Why, he's following you."
VISITOR: "Well, so are you."

The alleged misunderstanding

A LEFT-HAND STAB

PHYSICS INSTRUCTOR: "Name the unit of power, Mr. Jones."
JONES (waking up): "The what?"
INSTRUCTOR: "Correct. Any questions? All right. We have a few minutes before the end of the hour in which we will do this problem: A man on a bicycle approaches a four-per-cent grade; how far has he come and will he have to get off and walk?"

—*Cornell Widow.*

The twist based on a foible

NOUNETTE: "This is my newest dress, how do you like it?"
GABRIELLE: "It's beautiful, I had one exactly like it last year."

—*Puck.*

Inversion of words and ideas

An old Scotchman was standing with his dog before a stall of sea food. Suddenly he heard a wild yelp and turned to see his dog streaking down street with a lobster nipped to his tail.

"Mon, mon!" cried the dealer, "he's gangin' awa' wi' ane o' my lobsters! Whustle back yer dog, mon, whustle back yer dog!"

"Hoots, mon," said the other angrily, "whustle back yer lobster."

The " bull "

Our specialty is to do the thing that has never been done before and do it better.

The humor of word

WAR TALK

WAITER: "And will you take macaroni au gratin, sir?"
CAPTAIN OF ARTILLERY: "No macaroni—by gad. It's too doocid difficult to mobilize.—London *Opinion.*

The verbal twist

WELL, WHY NOT?

"Pop, what is a fortification?"
"A fortification, my boy, is a big fort."
"Then a ratification is a big"—
"Willie, go to bed at once!"—*Judge.*

Word-play based on reciprocal words

"What do you charge for your rooms?"
"Five dollars up."
"But I'm a student—"
"Then it's five dollars down."—*Cornell Widow.*

Word-play based on equivocal words

SOLICITUDE REWARDED

LADY BOUNTIFUL (to dry-goods clerk): "Have you any nice warm underclothing?"

NEW ASSISTANT: "Oh yes, miss, thank you.—London *Opinion.*

Pun based on words of similar sound

A BETTER SCHEME

SHE: "What did you think of our scheme for Christmas decoration—holly-leaves over laurel?"

HE: "Well, I should have preferred mistletoe over yew."
—*Tit-Bits.*

Pun based on different words with similar spelling

SHE: "I can't see what Mae has in common with young Highroller."

HE: "She's a grass widow and he's a rake.—*Judge.*

Pun based on eqivocal meanings of one word

NO LIMIT

MRS. NEWLYWED: "I want a cook, but she must be capable."

HEAD OF EMPLOYMENT AGENCY: "Madam, I have several on my books capable of anything."—*Judge.*

The naïve and surprising confession

ONLY A "RING OFF"

"Auntie, did you ever have a proposal?"

"Once, dear. A gentleman asked me to marry him over the telephone, but he had the wrong number."—*Harper's.*

The apt child-retort

FUTURE THEOLOGIAN

"Bobby, do you know you've deliberately broken the eighth commandment by stealing James's candy?"

"Well, I thought I might as well break the eighth commandment and have the candy as to break the tenth and only 'covet' it."—*Life.*

The witty retort

HANDICAPPED

With but three minutes to catch his train, the traveling salesman inquired of the street-car conductor, "Can't you go faster than this?"

"Yes," the bell-ringer replied, "but I have to stay with my car."—*Harper's.*

The quandary

RATHER DIFFICULT

CHEERFUL ONE (to newcomer, on being asked what the trenches are like): "If yer stands up yer get sniped; if yer keeps down yer gets drowned; if yer moves about yer gets shelled; and if yer stands still yer gets court-martialed for frost-bite."

—*Punch.*

Satire

THE SECRET

"What is an amateur?" is still one of the raging queries of the hour. But, in spite of all the recent discussion, we haven't changed the answer we evolved four years ago, viz., "Any one who can get away with it."—*New York Tribune.*

(d) *Humorous articles* are so various, and so often colored by the demands of particular magazines, that scarcely anything helpful can be said here, more than to direct attention to the importance of observing carefully three things before submitting material to a magazine: study the literary standard maintained, the tone evidently preferred by the editor (whether satirical, rollicking, subtle, timely, political, social, or what not), and the average length of material used. These considerations apply especially to *Life*, *Judge*, *Puck*, *Vanity Fair*, and other magazines devoted largely to humor. Restrictions of literary quality and length are not of quite so much importance in submitting material to the newspapers, yet they must be weighed well there also.

(e) *Humorous fiction*, as has already been said, uses the same fundamental ideas as are found in the jest, yet obviously the methods are quite different. All the six types of humor have full play in the story, particularly humor of situation, of character, of idea, and of word. Plot is, of course, the prime requisite. Given a really humorous situation, and the chances for the story are very good indeed.

Since fiction in general is reserved for treatment in a later chapter, only a few more words need here be said. Two considerations are large in importance: when humor is mingled with sentiment the largest public is appealed to; and, it is not well to over-weight a story with humor, particularly with farce—it may become silly. *Contrast* is the secret of good humorous work—contrast of character with character, situation with situation, language

with language, setting with setting—and *each with the other*.

4. Hints on Methods of Work

Study the materials and the methods of successful humorists, but do not be tempted to re-vamp their jests. Analysis of the work of others will pay you, but in your note-book set down, not their ideas, but the ideas their writings call out from your own mind.

Most humorous writing is done backwards—that is, the point is first decided on, then the epigram, anecdote, jest, article, or story is built up so as to lead naturally, swiftly and surprisingly to the pre-conceived climax.

Less and less humor of the slap-stick, or rough, farcical type, is used, and more of the subtle sort. For this reason inference is a much-used method, and sparkling brevity most desirable.

Give careful attention to the titles of your anecdotes, jests and articles. Many seen in print are vapid; for proof, read the titles quoted in this chapter—some are very weak. Or scrutinize the magazines and newspapers —the same criticism applies. The title to a humorous piece should be crisp, suggestive, apt, yet not so explicit as to forecast the point, or outcome.

Practice variety of presentation. The old "Bud and Scud" and "Mrs. Hashleigh," "He and She," and similar hoary schemes will, I suppose, always be used, but that supplies no excuse for failure to seek for something fresher.

Practice in highly compressed dialogue is essential. Let

what the characters say suggest what they are—do not simply tell about them.

Use description most sparingly, and when you do describe a character let it be by a single all-inclusive sentence, if in a story; or by nouns (substantives) rather than by adjectives, if in an anecdote. Ten needless words can kill five hundred well-chosen ones.

In basing a jest, an anecdote, or a story on a humorous character, set the character in motion promptly—not necessarily physical motion, but moving with or against the forces and characters of the piece you are writing. It is the direction and the changes of direction which a character takes that govern his humorous effect on the reader. Simple normality never produces a comic effect. This is worth repeating.

Exaggeration and restrained character burlesque is a method much used by the funny men. In humor we are interested chiefly in the things that make characters or situations different from all others. We already know the things that make them alike. Equivocal actions and situations, men working while unconscious that they are being observed, natural and unforced misunderstandings, characteristic repetitions of habits and words (used sparingly and at critical moments), seriousness when others are amused, traits of character rather than mere eccentricities of body and dress, twisted yet ingeniously specious reasoning, lovable foibles, something amusingly "mechanical encrusted upon the living," together with struggle, all the time *struggle*—these are the things that make humor humor.

Mirth-provoking ideas are everywhere. Today as I was

writing these lines, by some quirk an alarm clock began to sound in another room. In a minute it sounded again. Then again. It became laughable. Then a member of the household began futile efforts (two big words in humor) to make it keep quiet. But it refused until the spring had run down—yet by simply pushing a lever it might have been stopped at once. A humorist would invent any number of increasingly funny efforts to stop an alarm clock which persisted in going off at all sorts of untoward times.

The tendency, of course, is to do this sort of thing merely as a sketch—it will have ten times the market value when worked into a plot, *with enough other action to save it from being a mere funny picture.* This qualification is vital.

5. Markets for Humor

The final chapter of this book is given to the matter of marketing magazine material, yet here an important caution must be given: Do not aim solely, or even chiefly, at the magazines. With a very few exceptions, all humorists have made their public entry through the newspapers. Though many dailies buy only a paste pot and a pair of shears, many others purchase all sorts of comic material. If you can sketch, that will help, but it is not necessary. The main thing is to produce fresh material of as many kinds as you can, and keep on sending it out with as much discrimination as you can muster.

Do not send more than half-a-dozen anecdotes or jokes at a time. Send not only to dailies but also to Sunday papers, syndicates and all the magazines that use such

matter. You will soon learn which ones pay and which do not—for positively no one can save you the pangs of giving birth to experience.

The most marketable thing in the world is a fresh idea. George Ade and Walt Mason and Bill Nye and every press humorist who ever came to the front—each was not only able to write good humorous stuff but produced a *line* of material stamped with his own peculiar quality. But none of them began by being famous.

QUESTIONS AND EXERCISES

1. Why is it difficult to define the comic and related forms?

2. Criticise the author's definition.

3. Can you cite any attempt at humor that failed because it too nearly approached the serious?

4. What do people mean when they say, "I don't know whether to laugh or cry?"

5. Invent five stages, in the manner of the example given on page 96, from one of these situations: (*a*) A man falls through a ceiling into a bed room; (*b*) A man tries to climb a tree; (*c*) A boy steals away to swim.

6. Name a comic stage-incident which would have been too serious to laugh at in real life, and say why.

7. What effect on written humor does an air of deep sincerity in the writer have?

8. Discuss the humor of any one of the following: George Ade, Stephen Leacock, Irvin Cobb, Jerome K. Jerome, W. W. Jacobs, Mark Twain, any other well-known humorist.

9. What is the difference between comedy and farce?

10. Give one short example each of humor and wit.

11. Try to show briefly how they differ.

12. Give one original example each of the six kinds of humor (page 98)—no matter if any one merges into wit.

13. Expand any one of them into a short magazine or newspaper offering.

14. Clip at least five varieties of newspaper humor and name each.

15. Write something in the style of any one of these cuttings, but imitate the original in matter as little as possible.

16. Write either two original epigrams or one anecdote.

17. If you choose the epigram, recast it in two different styles; if you choose the anecdote, recast it in four styles, somewhat after the manner of the anecdotes given in the text.

18. Write three jests, saying what points they illustrate. If you prefer, take points not illustrated in this chapter, for there are many.

19. Criticise any of the titles of jests quoted in this chapter.

20. Suggest a better title for each weak one.

21. Invent titles for three jests in this chapter which have no titles.

22. Make an analysis of any humorous article you please.

23. Criticise favorably or unfavorably the humor in any magazine story.

CHAPTER IX

MAGAZINE POETRY

It is of course not within the scope of this work to enter into the theory of poetry and the rules of versification,[1] but merely to point out the character and the limits of magazine verse and suggest some practical ways for making the most of one's poetic gifts.

A greatly awakened interest in poetry is now manifest. Not only are volumes of collected verse increasing in number, and in sales for each worthy volume, but the subject is being studied more than ever before, both by writers and by readers. Magazines not only precede but follow books in the culture of public taste. Just which is pre-eminent in leadership it is difficult to say, but certainly the magazines have educated the people to look for and value a better grade of poetry in the collected works of present-day poets.

Several magazines which have lately appeared—notably *Poetry*, Chicago, *The Poetry Journal*, Boston, and *The Poetry Review*, Cambridge, Mass.—are devoted exclusively to this subject. As might be supposed, these little periodicals are less restrained by the demands of popularity than are the other magazines, so it will hardly be valuable to analyze their contents. "Anything good" is what the

[1] *The Art of Versification*, by J. Berg Esenwein and Mary Eleanor Roberts, published uniform with this volume in "THE WRITER'S LIBRARY," is a complete treatise on both poetry and versification.

editors want—and this open door will do much to encourage poets who chafe under the requirements of brevity, broad appeal, and the agreeable, which hedge about virtually all the other journals.

1. Length

Merit aside, for that is an ever-present prerequisite, *length* is naturally the one great bar that stands before the poet who would enter the magazine gates. Only now and then do we find a "long" poem—by which, for magazine uses, I mean one of, say, 64 lines. Indeed, the average length of 305 poems, found in examining 99 issues of 34 different (1916) magazines was slightly over 25 lines. In considering this average it is important to remember that it is materially raised by the inclusion of six poems which range from 95 to 458 lines each. By omitting these from the calculation the average would drop to about 20 lines, so that a poem of 24 lines may be taken as above the average of present-day popularity in length and a good poem of 16 lines, or less, has an even greater chance of being accepted.

AVERAGE LENGTH OF 305 MAGAZINE POEMS

Name of Magazine	Issues Examined	Number of Poems	Average Length
ARGOSY	3	13	18
ATLANTIC MONTHLY	3	6	32
BOOKMAN	2	4	18
CANADA MONTHLY†	3	1	8

Name of Magazine	Issues Examined	Number of Poems	Average Length
CENTURY	3	20	24
CHRISTIAN ENDEAVOR WORLD	3	7	20
COLLIER'S†	3	1	20
COSMOPOLITAN	3	3	31
DELINEATOR	3	4	12
DELINEATOR*	..	1	258
DESIGNER†	2	1	10
EVERYBODY'S	3	6	16
GOOD HOUSEKEEPING	3	7	44
HARPER'S	3	12	12
HEARST'S	3	3	38
INDEPENDENT	3	2	30
LADIES' HOME JOURNAL	3	14	28
LADIES' HOME JOURNAL*	..	1	176
MCCLURE'S	3	5	20
MOTHER'S	3	3	20
MUNSEY'S	3	37	16
NORTH AM. REVIEW	3	2	55
OUTING	3	3	7
OUTLOOK†	3	1	95
OVERLAND	3	23	20
OVERLAND*	..	1	458
PHYSICAL CULTURE†	3	1	30
PICTORIAL REVIEW	3	6	16
ST. NICHOLAS	3	17	40
SATURDAY EVENING POST†	3	1	350
SCRIBNER'S	3	15	29
SMART SET	3	33	15
SNAPPY STORIES	3	25	14
SOUTHERN WOMAN'S	3	23	20

Name of Magazine	Issues Examined	Number of Poems	Average Length
SYSTEM†	2	1	36
THEATRE†	3	1	40
WOMAN'S HOME COMPANION†	3	1	30

* There is one poem in this group of three issues that is too exceptional in length to be considered in the average for this magazine; but that poem is included in the grand average.

† Only one issue examined contained poetry. All that may be safely inferred from this fact is that little poetry is used by this periodical, for other issues might show a larger number.

Editors feel that most poems would profit by compression. Narrative poetry, to be sure, carries its own justification for length, but in this sort writers show a decided tendency to drag in the irrelevant. It is quite aside from the purpose of this chapter to discuss the effects of editorial demands on poetic inspiration; it is enough to note that only when the poet's theme is "big" enough to *command* interest, and his mastery of his art sufficiently advanced to make every line stand out with beauty or power, can he justly assume to fill two or more pages in a magazine.

2. Form

The first essential of form is to compress much into few lines—to send the mind of the reader sweeping out on precisely the course the poet wills, thinking and visioning the thoughts he has swiftly yet perfectly suggested. For this kind of poem there is room in hundreds of periodicals.

If the writer could only conceive and produce them he could sell one a day and two on holidays.

Take this specimen from the pen of Edwin Markham, study its wonderful suggestive power, and see why it would be preferred to longer verse.

OUTWITTED[1]

He drew a circle that shut me out—
Heretic, rebel, a thing to flout.
But Love and I had the wit to win:
We drew a circle that took him in!

Another mark of current magazine poetry is smoothness of form. There are few over-run lines, few rough quantities, excellent use of metrical variety, smooth metre and good rhyming.

Still another characteristic is the deft management of words. There are few archaisms, few words of classical allusion, and very little awkward inversion—in short, comparative simplicity of language.

3. Theme

Theme offers an illuminating subject for examination in magazine poetry of today. The preferences of each magazine must of course be considered by each writer as he submits material, but the following table, based on a study of the same poems referred to on page 120, will show what was current in the early part of 1916.

[1] From "*The Shoes of Happiness,*" by Edwin Markham. Copyright, 1916, by Doubleday, Page & Co. Used by the courteous permission of the publishers and the author.

THEMES OF 305 MAGAZINE POEMS

Love	66
Nature	51
Idealism or Aspiration	49
Jest	46
Child Life	21
War	15
Reminiscence	10
Christmas	9
Friendship	7
Patriotism	5
Sorrow and Death	5
Human Sympathy	4
Composite	3
Reflection and Revery	3
Animals	2
Disappointment and Discontent	2
Persons (Shakespeare)	1
Hate	1
Ambition	1
Legendary	1
Business	1
Happiness	1
Motherhood	1

Various inferences may be drawn from the foregoing table. The two most obvious ones are plainly contradictory: Since over seventy-five per cent. of the 305 poems considered are on idealistic themes, or deal with nature, or with love, or with jest (light verse), or with childhood—

five general themes—we ought to follow these leads; or it may be inferred that since so many writers are choosing these five themes, we ought to avoid them so as to get away from the herd.

But why accept either ready-made conclusion instead of looking beneath the surface? Some suggestive questions, which anyone may try to answer for himself, may throw light on this matter of theme.

Do editors accept so many love poems, for example, because they judge the people want them, or for the reason that so large a number of writers produce that sort? Can a poet choose his own themes as deliberately as a general writer selects his subjects for articles, or do poem-themes choose themselves? Can the maker of verses induce inspiration to write certain kinds of poems by directing his attention toward and thinking deeply—emotionally—upon such themes? Do not the more distinguished magazines print poems on the less hackneyed themes?

Merely to say that about seventeen per cent. of the listed poems have nature-subjects for their themes might prove misleading to surface-thinkers. Just as with other themes, it is the *unusual phase* of nature that stands out in good poetry. And I use the word "phase" deliberately. Young poets who deal with generalities instead of particularities do not get into print. "Unusual," too, needs emphasis, for the commonplace treatment of an unusual theme is deadly dull, while the unusual handling of the most commonplace subject is pretty sure to win a hearing.

It is interesting to note how some of these themes are distributed among the several magazines examined. Since

the list is quite an arbitrary one and might well have included periodicals which for one reason or another were not available at the time, and also because no more than three copies of any one magazine were studied—though more were examined—the conclusions must be taken, of course, as being indicative rather than final.

One third of the whole number of examples of light verse were found in two issues of *Munsey's*. As the table shows, *Life*, *Puck*, and *Judge* were not examined—light verse as a type comes in for separate treatment in the next chapter. The light verse of *Munsey's*, however, is not as nonsensical as that of the funny magazines and therefore is included in this study.

Other facts are interesting, though they prove nothing conclusively. For instance, the only poem found in examining three numbers of *The Outlook* was one of nearly one hundred lines on war. The other fourteen poems on war were distributed among ten magazines. The only periodicals using two or more were *Southern Woman's* (3), *Everybody's* (2) and *Independent* (2). The only poem on hate appeared in *The Century*, and three of the five poems dealing with sorrow and death appeared in one issue of that periodical.

Taking only this study of 305 poems as a basis, the nine largest users of verse are: *Munsey's*, 37; *Smart Set*, 33; *Snappy Stories*, 25; *Overland*, 24; *Southern Woman's Magazine*, 23; *Century*, 20; *St. Nicholas*, 17; *Scribner's*, 15; *Ladies' Home Journal*, 14; *Argosy*, 13; *Harper's*, 12. These conclusions will be found to be typical. So will the following: The sixty-six poems on love were confined to

Smart Set, 16; *Snappy Stories*, 13; *Munsey's*, 9; *Overland*, 6; *Argosy*, 5; *Southern Woman's*, 4; *Harper's*, 3; *Ladies' Home Journal*, 3; *Century*, 2; *Mother's*, 2; *Designer*, 1; *Atlantic*, 1; and *Bookman*, 1.

4. Tone

By far the great majority of poems in our periodicals are lyrical. This is largely accounted for by the joint facts that our first tendency is to express an emotion in terms of personal feeling, and that we are more deeply moved when reading a personal expression than when it is put in the abstract. Even the sonnet and other artificial forms are used for lyrical expression.

Narrative poems and didactic poems are very rarely found in our magazines; and when they are, the narration is short, simple, and direct, with merely a touch of the didactic conveyed by suggestion and not explicitly. These conditions are doubtless due not only to the limitations set by the magazines but also to an improved public taste in poetry that contemns dwelling upon the obvious.

SUGGESTIONS FOR VERSIFIERS

Do not try to write poetry by means of thought alone—poetry is chiefly an emotional expression.

Write on what interests you, and direct your interest toward as many things as you can.

Write on things that come home to the hearts of the people.

Tenderness is better than sharpness; leave the bitter themes to someone else.

Drill in all kinds of verse-writing gives ease in expression.

Master the meaning and the uses of tone-color.

Practice all varieties of feet, lines, and stanzas, suiting the form to the feeling. When you use an irregularity do it intentionally, to gain a certain desirable effect.

Use few if any unrhymed lines—never use *vers libre* because you find it difficult to write good meter and rhyme.[1]

Use few over-run lines.

Don't sacrifice everything to form.

Keep within the editor's favorite length limits.

QUESTIONS AND EXERCISES

1. Select from a magazine any form of verse you wish and analyze it critically.

2. Suggest any betterments you can, and show why you have made the change.

3. Set down a theme for an original poem.

4. What effect do you wish to produce?

5. After considering various metres, select the one you think best suited to the thought and feeling of your theme.

6. Write the first rough draft.

7. Can you condense your set of verses into fewer stanzas? Into one? Don't, if you are sure it will injure the expression.

8. Revise it, showing why you made the changes.

9. To what magazines might your verses be sent?

[1] *The Art of Versification* contains in its new edition a chapter on *vers libre*.

CHAPTER X

LIGHT VERSE

Light verse[1] offers a wider range of form than does real poetry, for the parodist may imitate every form known to the poets, and the whimsical rhymster will invent new conceits every day.

1. *Vers de Société*

For this broadest and highest-grade group of light verse it is difficult to find a precise English equivalent. *Vers de société* is not merely "society verse," as a literal translation would suggest, but *short, light, sentimental or playful verse of no profound poetic quality, and breathing an air of polite knowledge of the world.*

In form *vers de société* enjoys wide latitude, though the French meters are favorites with most of the poets. Thackeray's "The Ballad of Bouillabaisse," Alfred Austin's "At the Lattice," and Longfellow's "Beware," are among the most famous specimens in the language. Here is a representative example from *Lippincott's*—no longer published.

[1] This chapter is largely a very compact condensation of the chapter (covering sixty-seven pages) on "Light Verse" in *The Art of Versification*, by J. Berg Esenwein and Mary Eleanor Roberts, in "The Writer's Library." The verses, quoted from that volume, are fully protected by the original copyright, by that of *The Art of Versification*, and by the present copyright.

MY CHAPERON

By Anne Warrington Witherup

No Dragon is my chaperon;
She's full of life and charm
She has a method all her own
To hold me safe from harm
It is a method very wise,
Though simple as can be:
When men come by she makes such eyes
They never look at me.

2. *Satirical Verse*

Satire is a form of wit that exposes pretension and makes it ridiculous. Its object, like that of true comedy, is to instruct by showing the folly of imprudent courses, but that purpose is often lost sight of today.

Oliver Wendell Holmes dealt out wholesome satire to the all-bumptious when he wrote this stanza in "A Familiar Letter to Several Correspondents:"

But remember, O dealer in phrases sonorous,
So daintily chosen, so tunefully matched,
Though you soar with the wings of the cherubim o'er us,
The ovum was human from which you were hatched.

3. *Humorous Verse*

The types of light verse often overlap, and this is most true of humorous lines—a statement too obvious to need proof. We shall find humor in parody, nonsense rhymes, and whimsical verse, just as we find it delicately present in much *vers de société.*

(a) *Punning Verse*

NOMENCLATURE[1]

By Karl von Kraft

When Bossey invented a gentleman calf
They called him Monseigneur Boulé.
Next spring when a lady calf dawned on the scene
They christened her Calfy au Lait.

(b) *Humor of Situation*

THE VOICE OF THE EAST TO THE VOICE OF THE WEST[1]

By McLandburg Wilson

A most appreciative cuss,
The Sun gets up to look at us,
But when he strikes the West instead
He gets so bored he goes to bed.

THE VOICE OF THE WEST TO THE VOICE OF THE EAST[1]

By Robert Thomas Hardy

'Tis true that in the East the Sun
Doth rise, and yet 'tis evident
He likes it not, but hastens West
And settles down in sweet content!

(c) *Dialect Humor*

WHERE THE FUN COMES IN[1]

By John Kendrick Bangs

To hev all things, ain't suited to my mind,
Fer, as I go my way, I seem to find
That half the fun o' life is wantin' things,
An' t' other half is gettin' 'em, by Jings!

[1] From *Lippincott's*, by permission.

4. Parody and Travesty

Parody is mimicry, not serious imitation. It has for its object either the casting of more or less good-natured ridicule on the original, or merely the convenient use of a well-known poem, usually in jest—though light verse may be parodied in serious verses. Parody becomes *travesty* or *burlesque* when carried to the extreme of the ridiculous—though burlesque and *extravaganza* need not parody a *specific* original, but may poke extravagant fun at a general type.

(a) *Word-Mimicry*

THE BAT

By Lewis Carroll

(After Jane Taylor)

Twinkle, twinkle, little bat!
How I wonder what you're at!

* * * *

Up above the world you fly,
Like a tea-tray in the sky.

(b) *Form-mimicry*

YE CLERKE OF YE WETHERE

(After Chaucer)

A clerke there was, a puissant wight was hee,
Who of ye wethere hadde ye maisterie;
Alway it was his mirth and his solace—
To put each seson's wethere oute of place.
Whanne that Aprille showres wer our desyre,
He gad us Julye sonnes as hotte as fyre;
But sith ye summere togges we donned agayne,
Eftsoons ye wethere chaunged to cold and rayne.

Wo was the pilgrimme who fared forth a-foote,
Without any gyngham that him list uppe-putte;
And gif no mackyntosches eke had hee,
A parlous state that wight befelle—pardie!
We wist not gif it nexte ben colde or hotte,
Cogswounds! ye barde a grewsome colde hath gotte!
Certes, that clerke's one mightie man withalle,
Let none don him offence, lest ille befalle.

—*Anonymous.*

(*c*) *Sense-rendering*

One stanza only is given from:

ODE ON A JAR OF PICKLES

(After Keats)

By Bayard Taylor

A sweet, acidulous, down-reaching thrill
Pervades my sense. I seem to see or hear
The lushy garden-grounds of Greenwich Hill
In autumn, where the crispy leaves are sere;
And odors haunt me of remotest spice
From the Levant or musky-aired Cathay,
Or the saffron-fields of Jericho,
Where everything is nice.
The more I sniff, the more I swoon away,
And what else mortal palate craves, forego.

(*d*) *Semi-Parody*

A REAL SUMMER GIRL[1]

(After Whittier)

By J. G. Neumarker

Maud Muller on a summer's day
Raked the meadow sweet with hay.
You'd hardly expect a girl, you know,
In summer time to be shovelling snow.

[1] From *Lippincott's, by permission.*

5. Nonsense Verse

This type of light verse conveys merely nonsensical ideas. The result is sometimes brought about by such ingenious verbal inventions as have endeared Lewis Carroll and Edward Lear to millions. Who has not felt with conviction that "a runcible hat" was really worn by the charming writer who conceived the term! And who has not longed to know the joys of a "frabjous day!" These meaningless words must somewhere be real language, as indeed they have been to the old and young children of two generations.

Then, too, there is a rhythmical appropriateness about each nonsense-line by these genuine artists, and those written by some of their imitators, which is the sign and seal of artistry. Read "Jabberwocky" aloud and you feel the joy of its sound and movement. Then try to substitute either dictionary words or concoctions of your own, and note the loss.

On many accounts it will pay all poets and rhymesters—if any there be so unfortunate as not to know these delights—to study the verses in "Alice in Wonderland" and "Through a Looking Glass," by Lewis Carroll (Charles L. Dodgson), the collected "Nonsense Books" by Edward Lear, the "Bab Ballads" by W. S. Gilbert—whose work with Sir Arthur Sullivan in their light operas has made the world their debtor—and "A Nonsense Anthology," by Carolyn Wells, with its charming introductory essay.

JABBERWOCKY

By Lewis Carroll

'Twas brillig, and the slithy toves
Did gyre and gimble in the wabe;
All mimsy were the borogoves,
And the mome raths outgrabe.

"Beware the Jabberwock, my son!
The jaws that bite, the claws that scratch!
Beware the Jubjub bird, and shun
The frumious Bandersnatch!"

He took his vorpal sword in hand:
Long time the manxome foe he sought.
So rested he by the Tumtum tree,
And stood awhile in thought.

And as in uffish thought he stood,
The Jabberwock with eyes of flame
Came whiffing through the tulgey wood,
And burbled as it came!

One, two! One, two! And through, and through
The vorpal blade went snicker-snack!
He left it dead and with its head
He went galumphing back.

"And hast thou slain the Jabberwock?
Come to my arms, my beamish boy!
Oh, frabjous day! Callooh! callay!"
He chortled in his joy.

'Twas brillig, and the slithy toves
Did gyre and gimble in the wabe;
All mimsy were the borogoves
And the mome raths outgrabe.

There are no invented words in the following anonymous stanzas from *Punch*, but only impossible concepts:

BALLAD OF BEDLAM

Oh, lady, wake! the azure moon
  Is rippling in the verdant skies;
The owl is warbling his soft tune,
  Awaiting but thy snowy eyes.
The joys of future years are past,
  To-morrow's hopes have fled away;
Still let us love, and e'en at last
  We shall be happy yesterday.

The early beam of rosy night
  Drives off the ebon morn afar,
While through the murmur of the light
  The huntsman winds his mad guitar.
Then, lady, wake! my brigantine
  Pants, neighs and prances to be free;
Till the creation I am thine,
  To some rich desert fly with me.

6. The Limerick

This unique form of stanza was developed by Edward Lear, who himself wrote more than two hundred—of varying merit—illustrated by his own grotesque drawings, which often supplied the humor lacking in the limericks. Since then every rhymester has had his passion for limericks, and clever ones are still popular. In form, they are printed either in four lines or five—usually five; four-line limericks contain an internal rhyme in the third line, which in the five-line limerick is divided so as to make lines three and four.

Here are two examples by Lear—one of four and the other of five lines—both of which begin, as do nearly all his limericks, with "There was an old—" or "There was a

young—." Naturally, variety began to grow difficult after a time, so later rhymesters have been more free and thus have done more to improve the humor of the limerick than did Mr. Lear himself.

There was an Old Man with a beard,
Who said, "It is just as I feared!
Two Owls and a Hen, four Larks and a Wren,
Have all built their nests in my beard!"

There was an Old Man in a tree,
Who was terribly bored by a bee;
When they said, "Does it buzz?"
He replied, "Yes, it does!
It's a regular brute of a Bee."

Sometimes the limerick is indented—sometimes it is not.

A dentist, whose surname was Moss,
Fell in love with the charming Miss Ross;
But he held in abhorrence
Her Christian name, Florence,
So he called her his Dental Floss.

—Carolyn Wells.[1]

There was a tall Russian named Muski—
Wumiskiliviskivitchuski:
You may say his name twice,
If you think it sounds nice,
But I bet it will make your voice husky.

—Harry A. Rothrock.[1]

7. *Whimsical Verse*

Of this type there are too many varieties to give example here (see footnote on page 129). It need only be noted,

[1] From *Lippincott's*, by permission.

that they take up (a) *oddities of conception*, such as twists of language, mnemonics, mosaic verse, macaronics, archaic verse, and dialect whimsicalities; and (b) *oddities of form*, such as verses set in odd shapres (such as trees), typographical oddities, acrostics, versified enigmas, alliterative conceits, "letter verse," geographical whimsies, lipograms, numerical oddities, internal rhymes, prose verse (like Walt Mason's), alphabetical stanzas, monorhymes, chain verse, palindromes, tongue twisters, equivocal lines, echo verses, anagrams, charades in verse, "buried names," dithyrambs, and others.

8. General Observations

The markets for light verse are very wide indeed—much wider than for real poetry. Not only do the comic journals and the humor departments of magazines and newspapers use this material, but *vers de société* is accepted by nearly all the magazines that use any verse at all.

It is easily possible to strain too hard after odd effects. Either the genuinely pleasing light-verse touch, or the really humorous idea expressed in ordinary metre, is much more widely salable than a far-fetched idea expressed in the most ingenious form.

A mastery of good form is really an important matter for the writer of light verse, both because the best magazines insist upon it and for the reason that it prepares one for more serious work.

Mr. Arthur Guiterman, whose verses in *Life* and other journals are deservedly liked, recently gave an interview to

Joyce Kilmer for the New York *Times*. Mr. Guiterman believes that the training offered by writing much light verse will prove invaluable to even the genuine poet. When we remember that most of the great poets of all time—among them Aristophanes, Horace, Shakespeare, Milton, Coleridge, Burns, Keats, Henley, Mrs. Browning, Holmes, Taylor, Longfellow, and Emerson—have written delightfully in lighter vein, we are not surprised to find those whose names are less glorious frivoling as playfully as, in turn, their less serious brothers.

Mr. Guiterman says:

I suppose the best thing for the young poet to do would be to write on as many subjects as possible, including those of intense interest to himself. What interests him intensely is sure to interest others, and the number of others whom it interests will depend on how close he is by nature to the minds of his place and time. He should get some sort of regular work so that he need not depend at first upon the sale of his writings. This work need not necessarily be literary in character, altho it would be advisable for him to get employment in a magazine or newspaper office, so that he may get in touch with the conditions governing the sale of manuscript.

He should write on themes suggested by the day's news. He should write topical verse; if there is a political campaign on he should write verse bearing upon that; if a great catastrophe occurs, he should write about that, but he must not write on these subjects in a commonplace manner.

He should send his verses to the daily papers, for they are the publications most interested in topical verse. But also he should attempt to sell his work to the magazines, which pay better prices than the newspapers. If it is in him to do so, he should write humorous verse, for there is always a good market for humorous verse that is worth printing. He should look up the publishers of holiday-cards, and submit to them Christmas, Thanksgiving, and Easter verses, for which he would receive,

probably, about $5 apiece. He should write advertising verses, and he should, perhaps, make an alliance with some artist with whom he can work, each supplementing the work of the other.

Please understand that our hypothetical poet must all the time be doing his own work, writing the sort of verse which he specially desires to write. If his pot-boiling is honestly done, it will help him with his other work.

He must study the needs and limitations of the various publications. He must recognize the fact that just because he has certain powers it does not follow that everything he writes will be desired by the editors. Marked ability and market ability are different propositions.

There is high precedent for this course. You asked if I would give this advice to the young Keats. Why not, when Shakespeare himself followed the line of action of which I spoke? He began as a lyric poet, a writer of sonnets. He wrote plays because he saw that the demand was for plays, and because he wanted to make a living and more than a living. But because he was Shakespeare his plays are what they are.

Don't think of yourself as a poet, and don't dress the part.

Don't classify yourself as a member of any special school or group.

Don't call your quarters a garret or a studio.

Don't frequent exclusively the company of writers.

Don't think of any class of work that you feel moved to do as either beneath you or above you.

Don't complain of lack of appreciation. (In the long run no really good published work can escape appreciation.)

Don't think you are entitled to any special rights, privileges, and immunities as a literary person, or have any more reason to consider your possible lack of fame a grievance against the world than has any shipping-clerk or traveling salesman.

Don't speak of poetic license or believe that there is any such thing.

Don't tolerate in your own work any flaws in rhythm, rime, melody, or grammar.

Don't use "e'er" for "ever" , "o'er" for "over," "whenas" or "what time" for "when," or any of the "poetical" commonplaces of the past.

Don't say "did go" for "went," even if you need an extra syllable.

Don't omit articles or prepositions for the sake of the rhythm.

Don't have your book published at your expense by any house that makes a practice of publishing at the author's expense.

Don't write poems about unborn babies.

Don't—don't write hymns to the Great God Pan. He is dead, let him rest in peace!

Don't write what everybody else is writing.

QUESTIONS AND EXERCISES

1. Briefly discuss Horace's line: "A comic subject loves an humble verse."

2. Select a humorous poem of high grade and point out its humorous qualities.

3. Do the same for a witty poem.

NOTE: Exercises of this sort may be applied to other forms indefinitely.

4. Discuss "John Gilpin's Ride," by Cowper.

5. Compare the humorous verse of Carolyn Wells with that of John Kendrick Bangs (see present-day magazines).

6. Compare the humor of John Hay's poem, "Little Breeches," with that of Bret Harte's "Jim," or his "Truthful James" (sometimes called "The Heathen Chinee").

7. Do the same for any other two well-known poems that are generally classed as humorous.

8. Select two sets of verses that illustrate the difference (*a*) between parody and extravaganza; (*b*) between burlesque and extravaganza.

9. If in light verse a highly poetic line rich in imagery be introduced, will it have a tendency to help or to hurt the verse? Say why.

10. Write brief differentiating definitions of verse of the following classifications: *Vers de Société*, Satirical, Humorous, Nonsense, and Whimsical Verse.

11. Which seems to you to be the sort best worth attempting? Give reasons.

12. If *Vers de Société* appeals to you, write several verses in that style upon a theme that you think should prove attractive to the leading magazines.

13. (*a*) Name an example of humorous verse that appeals to you; (*b*) try to analyze and to capture the spirit of its humor; (*c*) write a stanza or two embodying a different thought but with the same humorous turn or construction.

14. Write a satirical stanza ridiculing some fashionable foible or custom that seems to you to be in bad taste.

15. Has satire often wrought reforms?

16. Write a limerick upon the subject of your desire to write a limerick.

NOTE: Unlimited imitations of whimsical forms may be taken up as additional assignments.

CHAPTER XI

MAGAZINE FICTION

Without either an experimental or a theoretical knowledge of the technique of fiction it is difficult to write it successfully. Fortunately for beginners, both books and personal instruction have been provided—the latter in established schools, resident and non-resident; the former of varying scope and cost.[1] The function of this chapter is not to instruct in the difficult art of fiction writing, but to present a few important foundation facts, together with some important notes on current practice.

1. The Fictional Sketch

By this term is meant a literary impression or picture of a mood, an emotion, a character, a place, or a condition of affairs. It does not concern itself so much with what is being done or will be done as with what *is*. It is, so to put it, a "still" photograph and not a photoplay. Picture an old man standing sadly by a green mound on a grass-grown, fragment-strewn battle field, and you have a sketch of the simplest type. We need not know names or facts; the situation suggests enough to make us feel the poignancy of a loss—perhaps of an old general, or a comrade of former years, or a son.

[1] See, among many other books, *The Technique of the Novel*, Charles F. Horne; and *Writing the Short-Story*, J. Berg Esenwein.

Thus it is plain that the writer succeeds with his sketch in proportion as he is able to call up in our minds the images he himself has seen while looking, whether in reality or in fancy, upon a certain scene. He must first see, then make us see; feel, then make us feel.

The literary sketch is a high-class form, hence it is rarely found in any but the best magazines. It is too subtle in structure and in appeal to be popular with either sensational writers or the herd of readers. Good examples of sketches are found in the short work of John Galsworthy and Henry Van Dyke in *Century* and *Scribner's*.

In length, the sketch ranges from a few hundred words up to fifteen hundred, but rarely more. When it goes beyond two thousand the tendency will be to divide it into episodes, for attention flags when too long bent on a single picture without essential change in its elements. Besides, the average mind soon wearies of symbolism—with which the sketch often deals—craving that reality of which, after all, the symbolic is but the suggestion.

One caution should be given here: the subject of the sketch had better not be too general. "Truth" as a theme is too vague, but childish truth confronted by a father's roughness is specific and at once evokes pictures—pictures which *suggest* a result yet do not turn the sketch into a short-story by *showing* how the situation works out.

2. The Tale

The real tale is the simplest fictional form in point of structure. Though longer, it is even more simple than the

anecdote, for it need not work up to a sudden point.[1] The tale is merely a chain of incidents, linked solely at the will of the narrator, beginning and stopping at some convenient point, and not arranged so as to develop a plot. "The Headless Horseman," from Irving's *Sketch Book*, is a good example.

There is very little market for the plotless tale. Even hunting and adventure stories, and incidents in the life of an interesting child, are now strung on some plot-thread, however simple, so as to carry interest from event to event. This is worth remembering.

Two general deductions from the fiction of the day seem worth making: The less a story leans on plot the more must it exhibit external action. A simple record of inner experiences is not suitable for the short tale. The second observation is similar in tone: The longer the tale, the livelier must be the movement. A little action strung out with many words makes a hopeless product.

3. The Short-Story

It naturally follows from what has been said of the sketch and the tale that a short-story is not merely any story that is short. This most highly organized of all short fictional forms must have a plot, and a plot may be defined as an arrangement of the incidents of the story so as to show a crisis in the affairs of the leading character or

[1] All the short fictional forms are treated fully, with complete examples, in *The Art of Story Writing*, by Esenwein and Chambers, "The Writer's Library." The types discussed are anecdote, ancient fable, modern fable, ancient parable, modern parable, early tale, modern tale, legend, sketch, and short-story.

characters, together with such a resolution of that crisis as results in either an unexpected return to the original status or a definite change.

It goes without saying that the widest possible latitude in theme, length, treatment and style is found in the present-day short-story. Even hybrids are not uncommon, and certainly now and then not lacking in charm, as when the sketch crosses with the true short-story form.

Because of this remarkable variety in matter and manner, few valuable deductions from current practice may be drawn in so brief a discussion as this. But let us see how long are the stories which the magazines are printing nowadays.

AVERAGE LENGTH OF 829 SHORT-STORIES IN 120 ISSUES OF FORTY DIFFERENT MAGAZINES

Name of Magazine	Number of Short-Stories in three Issues	Words in the Longest Story	Average Length
Short Stories	27	10,000	7,245
Hearst's	16	10,000	7,212
Travel	1	7,200	7,200
Metropolitan	10	10,000	6,860
Cosmopolitan	10	8,200	6,600
Adventure	26	9,750	6,377
Red Book	34	9,200	6,100
Harper's	23	8,400	6,044
McClure's	23	9,100	6,000
Scribner's	14	7,600	5,850
Pictorial Review	15	8,500	5,840
Saturday Evening Post	17	9,800	5,830

Name of Magazine	Number of Short-Stories in three Issues	Words in the Longest Story	Average Length
Ainslee's	13	8,400	5,423
Sunset	12	9,200	5,188
Argosy	19	11,000	5,105
Pearson's	17	6,900	4,810
Atlantic	8	9,100	4,775
Century	18	8,400	4,750
Everybody's	15	6,700	4,653
Munsey	19	9,600	4,636
Collier's	11	6,000	4,500
Delineator	10	7,200	4,450
All-Story	15	7,500	4,253
Woman's Home Companion	21	6,000	4,143
Young's	42	8,500	4,075
Outing	5	6,200	4,060
American	18	5,500	3,800
St. Nicholas	11	8,000	3,786
Snappy Stories	40	9,300	3,635
Good Housekeeping	14	5,000	3,568
Designer	8	5,000	3,425
Christian Endeavor World	13	5,400	3,100
Canada Monthly	22	6,000	3,086
Mother's	23	5,200	2,895
Black Cat	27	7,500	2,842
Southern Woman's	21	6,300	2,776
Smart Set	48	7,900	2,775
Bellman	2	2,300	2,150
Ladies' Home Journal	21	4,500	2,136
Overland	20	3,500	1,935
Grand Average		4,519	

Solely because young writers are likely to take it as a warranty for indulging their weakness for length I hesitate to say that for several years the movement has been toward printing somewhat longer short-stories, the present average being, as we have just seen, 4,500 words. If we consider merely literary quality, this trend, within limits, is a good one because over-compression in fiction squeezes out atmosphere and character reality, but the very desirable qualities of vividness and forward movement are not well conduced by free expansion.

Note, also, that the average length of stories accepted by the magazines is only a little more than one half the maximum length. This fact is significant, for it points to the many stories that are shorter than the average. Ten thousand words is about the extreme limit, and then we begin to have the novellette—with its fifteen thousand or more words and its more expanded plot-movement, setting and characterization, and its broader picture of life.

The question of length has a vital bearing on salability. So many writers persist in sailing near the limit of length preferred by a given editor that one need not even refer to those whose stories exceed the limit. It should be enough to point out the folly of regarding oneself as the exception. The truth is—and there can be no gainsaying the fact—that it is ten times as hard to place a long short-story as a short short-story. Yet young writers blindly go on writing stories of seven, eight and nine thousand words—and even longer. Why? Because it is easier to write long stories than short ones; because they fatuously think their stories cannot be condensed without spoiling them;

because they have not mastered the art of writing and do not know how to compress; because they have seen long short-stories published and that proves to them that their stories are not too long; because a certain magazine announces that it has no limit of length and therefore, it is reasoned, they want long stories; because they have heard that stories are paid for at so much per word.

But what is the truth? *Editors strongly prefer short short-stories.* This statement is based on my own long editorial experience and on association with many other magazine editors. Altogether apart from the fact that the vast majority of short-stories published would be better told if a quarter of their words were edited out, an editor wants short short-stories to balance the long ones that inevitably come to him. The physical limitations of his magazine demand this. He never buys a "light weight" long story, but a slight short one he may buy to eke out his table of contents. It is quite safe to say that the clever writer who will for five years set himself or herself the task of doing vivid stories of from fifteen hundred to thirty-five hundred words, and not one word more, will attain a vogue that will permit of longer work later.

The present average of published short-stories is poor enough in quality. Editors fondly imagine that the public likes pretty nearly all that it buys. The fact is, the public buys in the weary hope that it is going to find something better this time. Too many editors have a very meagre foundation for their own editorial judgments. Some editors form public taste—others are formed by it.

Mr. Edward J. O'Brien, writing in the Boston *Trans-*

script, and later in a book entitled "The Best Short Stories of 1915," gives the results of his examination of 2200 stories printed in America during 1915. In this study, which covered forty-six periodicals, he found that "683 stories possessed distinction.....; 269 stories possessed high distinction.....; and 91 stories were of more or less permanent literary value ....." A similar list is promised year by year.

The investigator says that this study has made him

"lastingly hopeful of our literary future. A spirit of change is acting on our literature. There is a fresh living current in the air. .... As the most adequate means to my end, I have taken each short story that I have considered by itself, and examined it impartially. I have done my best to surrender myself to the writer's point of view, and granting his choice of material and interpretation of it in terms of life, have sought to test it by the double standard of substance and form. Substance is something achieved by the artist in every act of creation, rather than something already present, and accordingly a fact or group of facts in a story only obtain substantial embodiment when the artist's power of compelling, imaginative persuasion transforms them into a living truth. The first test of a short story, therefore, is to discover how compelling the writer makes his selected facts or incidents. This test may be called the test of substance.

"My second test is the test of form. I endeavor to discover how successfully the artist has shaped his substance into the most satisfying form. The short stories which I have examined in this study have fallen naturally into four classes, as they did before. The first class survived no tests, and of these stories I bring no report. The second class, indicated without asterisk, has passed either the test of substance or the test of form. The third class, indicated by one asterisk, has passed both the test of substance and the test of form. The fourth class consists of stories which signally excel, so that they may honestly lay claim to a somewhat permanent literary value. These I have double-starred."

If Mr. O'Brien's judgments are sound, and if he has not been too much influenced by literary reputations, the magazine-buying public is rapidly growing no better, for it is interesting to note how the following ratings of quality are in almost every instance in inverse ratio to circulation. This table gives the percentage of distinctive stories out of the whole number published by the magazines which attained an average of 15 per cent or higher. Each of the lowest five in the scale has a circulation of from one to two million monthly!

PERCENTAGE OF STORIES OF DISTINCTION

1.	Scribner's Magazine	71%
2.	Century Magazine	60
3.	Harper's Magazine	56
4.	The Metropolitan	51
5.	The Bellman	51
6.	American Magazine	42
7.	Lippincott's Magazine and McBride's Magazine	36
8.	McClure's Magazine	35
9.	Illustrated Sunday Magazine	32
10.	Collier's Weekly	32
11.	Sunset Magazine	31
12.	Every Week	30
13.	Everybody's Magazine	28
14.	Associated Sunday Magazines (Jan.–May, excluding stories in Every Week, q.v.)	24
15.	Delineator	23
16.	Pictorial Review	22

17. Ladies' Home Journal..... 19%
18. Saturday Evening Post..... 18

As the table shows, *Scribner's Magazine*, in Mr. O'Brien's opinion, printed the most consistently high-grade short fiction during 1915, therefore a list of the stories chosen from this one periodical will be interesting as showing both a group of titles and a selection of authors, as well as for the stories themselves.

Scribner's Magazine Stories

*Coals of Fire, Mary Raymond Shipman Andrews
Brewster Blood, Katharine Holland Brown
*White Hyacinths, Mary Synon
Arthur Orton's Career, George Hibbard
*Leda and the Swan, Katherine Fullerton Gerould
**The Bounty-Jumper, Mary Synon
*Hathor: A Memory, John Galsworthy
*The Shunway, Armistead C. Gordon
The Border-Land, Francis Parsons
Esau's Daughter, Mary Synon
*Sekhet: A Dream, John Galsworthy
*Baytop, Armistead C. Gordon
**Martin's Hollow, Katherine Fullerton Gerould
*The Last Flash, Sarah Barnwell Elliott
*Made in Germany, Temple Bailey
**The Water-Hole, Maxwell Struthers Burt
**Miss Marriott and the Faun, Katherine Fullerton Gerould
Educating the Binneys, Olivia Howard Dunbar

The Speed King, William Wright
*Mother Machree, James Brendan Connolly
*At the End of the Rainbow, Jennette Lee
A Little Tragedy at Coocoocache, George T. Marsh
*Her First Marrying, Una Hunt
"As Long As Yo's Single Dere's Hope," Una Hunt
The Best-Seller, Gordon Hall Gerould
*The King's Harnt, Armistead C. Gordon
Harlequin to the Rescue, Hugh Johnson
*A Pair of Lovers, Elsie Singmaster
*Undesirables, Mary Synon
*The Nippon Garden, John Seymour Wood
The Antwerp Road, Henry Van Dyke
**The Medicine Ship, James Brendan Connolly
**Jeanne, the Maid, Gordon Arthur Smith
The Very Lilac One, Mary Raymond Shipman Andrews
**Coming Home, Edith Wharton
The Jade, Abbie Carter Goodloe
*The First-Born, Katharine Holland Brown

4. Longer Magazine Fiction

In a few magazines (a) *the book-length novel* is published complete in one issue, or in two parts. It is obvious that to meet the former condition the novel must either be a short one or be cut for single-magazine use. As to the character of the story, no safe generalizations can be made beyond the banality that such a novel must be "popular" in tone.

An examination of forty magazines, covering at least twelve months each, shows that the average length of

novels published either in single numbers or in two issues is 66,250 thousand words.

(b) *The serial* is a form of varying popularity. Every now and then a magazine publisher decides that the public does not want continued stories, so he cuts them out of his program; still, they are used by almost all the fiction-printing magazines.

A serial usually is based on the book-length novel for the reason that the author hopes to arrange for book publication after serialization, if, indeed, such an arrangement has not first been made. This means that the book-length novel is offered in large numbers to magazine publishers.

Yet the long novel is often cut for serial use, though when it is so cut it is not chiefly because it would require too many installments to give the complete novel, but for another reason, vital to the interest of the reader: *Each installment of the serial must come to a climax of its own, while all the parts must maintain an increasing interest up to the grand climax.*

In order to secure this series of climaxes, and yet preserve a balance of length among the several parts, the editor may have to make cuts—with or without the author's help. Hence it is most important for the author to plan his serial with these part-climaxes in mind. Particularly is this true when we remember that many serials never come to book publication.

The serials printed in thirty-two magazines—the inquiry covering twelve months—averaged, in round numbers, 55,000 words in length. The average number of install-

ments required to complete the serial publication of these novels averaged slightly less than eight, and the average number of words for each installment was almost exactly 10,000.

That these averages include a considerable variety of magazine practice will appear from the condensed table following. The data has been furnished, in each instance, by the magazine editors and, as has been said, is based on the experience of at least twelve months. It should be remembered, however, that from year to year the policy of a given magazine may vary, so that, for example, the periodical that for the past year has used no serials may be in the market for continued stories next season, or the reverse may be the case. As a rule, however, this table will be a safe guide to the requirements of the more than two score magazines listed. Before submitting long fiction other than as here called for, writers should first satisfy themselves that the magazine has changed its policy.

Obviously, the appended list does not include all the serial and novelette markets in the United States, hence it will be wise to be on the lookout for all the magazines and weekly newspaper supplements which offer markets for long fiction, especially the newer all-fiction publications. Even the specialized periodicals now and then use serial stories. Your notebook or card index may well be used to record such information as it comes to you. Thus many a novelette or novel may find a market after the better-known houses have refused your story. New magazines are constantly appearing—many destined to die within a twelve-month, and a few to live.

Longer Magazine Fiction

NAME OF MAGAZINE	COMPLETE NOVELETTES: NUMBER OF WORDS	COMPLETE NOVELS: NUMBER OF WORDS	SERIAL STORIES		
			NUMBER OF WORDS	NUMBER OF INSTALLMENTS	LENGTH OF INSTALLMENTS
Adventure	20,000	66,000	75,000	3–4	19,000
Ainslee's	35,000	.....	60,000	4	15,000
All-Story	25,000	80,000	80,000	5	15,000
American	.....	.....	40,000 75,000	4–8	5,000 7,500
Argosy	.....	60,000	35,000 50,000	3	15,000 20,000
Blue Book	12,000	55,000	90,000	6	15,000
Book News	.....	.....	80,000	6–10	5,000
Breezy Stories	16,000	.....	.....	.....	.....
Century	.....	.....	70,000 100,000	7–8	10,000 15,000
Cosmopolitan	.....	.....	80,000 100,000	8–12	10,000
Delineator	See note 1	.....	50,000 60,000	6	8,000 9,000
Designer	20,000	.....	50,000	6	8,000
Everybody's	See note 2	.....	100,000 110,000	8–9	10,000 11,000
Every Week	.....	.....	60,000 75,000	10–12	5,500
Good Housekeeping	20,000	.....	60,000 80,000	8–10	7,000 8,000
Harper's	.....	.....	100,000 120,000	6–8	15,000
Hearst's	.....	.....	110,000	10	11,000
Holland's	.....	.....	50,000 75,000	6–8	8,500
Housewife	.....	.....	25,000 30,000	6	4,000 5,000
Ladies' Home Journal	.....	.....	50,000	6–10	5,000 8,000
McClure's	See note 3	.....	65,000 95,000	8	8,000 12,000
Metropolitan	20,000 23,000	.....	90,000 100,000	8–9	8,500 10,000
Munsey	See note 4	42,000 122,000	.....	.....	.....
National	.....	.....	80,000	7	11,000
Outing	.....	.....	40,000	5	8,000
Overland	.....	.....	See note 5	.....	.....
Pearson's	.....	.....	See note 5	.....	.....
Pictorial Review	15,000 25,000	.....	80,000 100,000	3–4	20,000 25,000
Popular	25,000	50,000	80,000	4	20,000
Red Book	.....	.....	100,000	8	12,000
St. Nicholas	See note 6	.....	50,000 60,000	10–12	4,500 5,000
Scribner's	25,000 40,000	.....	100,000	10–12	8,000 10,000
Short Stories	30,000	55,000	.....	.....	.....
Smart Set	18,000	.....	.....	.....	.....
Smith's	25,000	.....	85,000	Varies	Varies
Southern Woman's	.....	.....	30,000	6	5,000
Sunset	.....	.....	80,000	8–9	10,000
Young's	27,500	.....	.....	.....	.....
Youth's Companion	.....	.....	35,000	10	3,500

See Notes 1–6 on next page.

NOTE 1. *The Delineator* occasionally uses two-part stories of from 16,000 to 18,000 words each.

NOTE 2. *Everybody's* occasionally uses three- or four-part stories of about 40,000 words in length.

NOTE 3. *McClure's* occasionally uses two- or three-part stories in installments of from 8,000 to 12,000 words each.

NOTE 4. *Munsey* will use some serials and novelettes to vary its program. The average full-length novel printed in single issues during 1915 was 75,000 words.

NOTE 5. *Overland* and *Pearson's* rarely use serials.

NOTE 6. *St. Nicholas* occasionally uses short serials, or novelettes, of from 15,000 to 20,000 words.

Though the methods of the short-story artist rather than those of the novelist are invoked by the writer of (c) *the novelette*, still it must be regarded as a little novel, and not merely as a long short-story.

It differs from the novel chiefly in compression, speed of movement, always-lively treatment, and swift ending. By so much as these qualities are emphasized does the novelette lack the leisurely, analytical manner of the serious novel. It is a moderately long action told by short-story methods. A beginning that sets us in the midst of the action, much dialogue, brisk movement, and swift contrasts, are essential to the successful novelette.

In length, novelettes vary from the extreme of twelve or fifteen thousand words to forty thousand. From twenty to thirty thousand words is a safe average, based on present usage. In style, they vary precisely as do the magazines that print them. Since *Lippincott's* long ago began the practice of printing either a novel or a novelette complete in each issue, the market has extended to its present size, and evidently the end is not yet.

TEN MAXIMS FOR BEGINNERS IN FICTION WRITING

The materials for good stories are in the life you know best, for the striking story is generally an unusual outcome given to a commonplace situation.

Themes that are worn threadbare, salacious situations, and bitterly partisan subjects make it difficult to find a market.

A plot is based on a contest of wills, a clash of interests, an obstacle in a course, some internal or external struggle, which causes suspense and suggests an interesting outcome.

Change the real-life story into fiction by inventing conditions and happenings that round out the plot. Realism is not mere fidelity to actual happenings.

Most good plots will contain two or three twists—or unexpected turns. O. Henry is a good model for the twist.

Avoid the use of mere coincidence and accident in critical turns in a plot. The fact that such things happen in real life does not make them convincing in fiction.

Characters, surroundings and actions are three great kinds of fictional material. Each influences the other in a story. Plan out these influences and inter-influences clearly before you write so that you may be working toward a definite end.

Don't open with long explanations. Instead of beginning in the past and laboriously bringing things down to date, jump into the middle of the action as Kipling did in *Without Benefit of Clergy:* "But suppose it is a girl."

Use dialogue not only to show your characters as interesting talkers but to tell the reader what he must know

in order to understand the story. Conceive of your characters as being on the stage and talking for the enlightenment of the audience.

End when interest is at its height. Long-drawn-out falling actions have killed countless good stories. Resist the desire to explain or picture what the reader may be made to surmise or picture for himself.

QUESTIONS AND EXERCISES

1. Select a piece of magazine fiction and criticise it according to the foregoing "Ten Maxims," and the "Points for Self-Criticism," Appendix B.

2. State the plot in about two hundred words.

3. What is the struggle, and what is the crisis?

4. Point out any twists in the course of the plot.

5. Outline an original short-story plot in not more than three hundred words.

6. Outline the setting—that is, the visible surroundings, like those of a stage scene.

7. Briefly describe the two leading characters. Don't have too many people in your story.

8. Write the introduction.

9. Write the whole story rapidly.

10. Polish it carefully—as often as if your ultimate success depended on this one story. Indeed, this may be the case.

CHAPTER XII

PLAYS

Until lately the printed play has been an almost negligible quantity in the magazines, yet now a fair number of periodicals use them at intervals, and in a few magazines they are found with considerable regularity. However, it could serve no good purpose to give here a list of magazines which accept plays, because editorial policies change so unexpectedly. Play writers—not to say playwrights—should be on the alert for magazine openings both old and new, for the printed play seems destined to add to its present growing popularity. Every first-class book shop now displays five times the number of volumes of plays that it did only a few years ago, so the magazines are quite sure to take up this interesting form increasingly. The growth of popular interest in the drama, as distinguished from mere theatre going, is also shown by the popularity of such general organizations as The Drama League, the formation of countless local centers for the study of the drama and the growing attention given to dramatic literature by colleges and clubs. So many new plays are produced every year by amateurs, to say nothing of the enormous rewards won by successful professional production, that this field for the writer is becoming very inviting indeed, not alone for magazine publication but for book and stage as well.

1. Kinds of Plays Used in the Magazines

(a) *The full-length play* offers the smallest market, for obvious reasons. *Physical Culture* has been running several, in two or three installments—"The Doctor's Dilemma," by George Bernard Shaw, is one recently used. It is certain that a new manuscript would have to be unusually brilliant to win magazine publication in competition with a full-evening play already successfully produced. However strong might be its dramatic qualities, it would have to *read* well, and this is not true of many plays that have been truly great successes on the boards. When setting, lights, movement, character-appearance, "business," and all that appeals to the eye, are missing, or at most merely indicated by a few swift words, the dialogue must be peculiarly well considered in order to tell the play-story and secure the needed effects.

It must be remembered that the spoken play is not first of all literary, nor in some instances at all literary. We all know that Shakespeare printed and Shakespeare for the stage are two very different versions. The writer who is preparing his manuscript for magazine or book use—and this applies especially to the full-length play—must expect to alter it materially for stage use. In only a few instances —Ibsen and Shaw are examples—will the one version serve almost equally well for the other.

(b) *Tabloid versions of stage successes* occasionally are printed in the magazines. *Current Opinion* furnishes cases in point. These, however, are never offered by unknown

contributors but are prepared by special editorial arrangement with the owners of the production.

(c) *Poetic plays*, such as those by Mr. John Masefield and the late Stephen Phillips, are now and then used by the best magazines. Needless to say, these must possess both dramatic value and true poetic quality. They need not be bound by the conventional number of acts, and though blank verse is their usual form, any form of line is justifiable so long as the lines have a *spoken* quality (scarcely possible when short lines are constantly used) and a dignity in perfect harmony with the theme and the essential idea of poetry.

It must be clear that a special study of the poetic drama is necessary for one who would attempt it. Not many have succeeded in this difficult province, and of those whose printed plays are widely read only a very few have been able to write good plays and good poetry at the same time. Robert Browning never wrote a poetic play suitable for general production—"Pippa Passes" is charming poetry in dramatic form, but not good drama. It is, however, possible to write a good play in good poetry, but only if one is both a dramatist and a poet.[1]

(d) *One-act plays* offer a wider market than any forms thus far named.[2] Both on account of the crisp brevity of

[1] For a comprehensive study of play construction see *The Technique of Play Writing*, by Charlton Andrews, published uniform with this volume in "The Writer's Library." Unless one is an expert dramatist the study of some such work as this admirably practical treatise is absolutely necessary.

[2] For a very full and remarkably helpful treatment of the playlet see *Writing for Vaudeville*, by Brett Page, in "The Writer's Library." There is also an excellent chapter on the subject in Mr. Andrews' *The Technique of Play Writing*.

the playlet—which makes it bear the same relation to the full-evening play that the short-story sustains to the novel—and because the rapid action makes reading an agreeable diversion for the popular mind, the magazines find more room for this shorter dramatic form than could well be given to the longer.

The only practical counsel here to be given is, be sure that the theme is essentially dramatic—that is to say, of a nature requiring that it be shown in action; that the crisis arising from the essential struggle is of such value as to hold interest tense; and that after the knot is untied the falling action comes swiftly and with full satisfaction. To say more would be to attempt a treatise on dramatics.

(e) *Special dramatic forms* cover, of course, a wide range of types. Because they are better suited to amateur production than are any of the foregoing forms—with the exception possibly of the one-act play—more magazines open their pages to these nondescripts. For example, periodicals devoted to school, club and home life often print little farces, comediettas, burlettas, masques, moralities, charades, tableaux, monologues, sketches, church and school entertainments, and combinations of these several types which can only be called "plays." After magazine production such manuscripts may sometimes be sold to publishers who make a specialty of entertainment booklets, such as The Penn Publishing Company, Philadelphia; Dick and Fitzgerald, New York; E. S. Werner & Co., New York; Samuel French, New York; T. S. Denison & Co., Chicago; and Walter A. Baker,

Boston. Most of the religious publishers issue books of church and Sunday-school entertainments.

2. Good Form for Dramatic Manuscripts

Either of the usual forms for the play manuscript will serve also for the magazine. In the following the names of the characters are typed in red, as are the stage and "business" directions. The dialogue is typed in black, blue or purple.

William

I'm sorry if my well-meant words don't suit your taste, but I thought you came here for advice.

Hobson

(Rising) I didn't come to you, you jumped-up cock-a-hooping—

Maggie

That'ull do, father. My husband's trying to help you.

Hobson

(Sits. Glares impatiently for a time, then meekly says:) Yes, Maggie.

Maggie

Now, about this accident of yours.

For the stage copy the following form also is used: The typing is all done in the same color—black, blue, or purple —the names of characters and the stage directions being underscored in red ink—by an ordinary pen—if preferred.

Act II

GRAVES. Burton!

(Startled by his tone, the others turn and regard Graves curiously.)

BURTON. Yes, sir.

GRAVES. Where's Sam?

BURTON. He went out, Sir---

GRAVES. Went out?

BURTON. Y-yes, Sir. About a quarter of an hour ago.

GRAVES. Where to?

BURTON. He didn't say, Sir.

(Graves turns away helplessly. Burton listens and then exits C. Graves walks up and down, wringing his hands.)

In order to save space most magazines print plays in a more condensed form, as in the following extract from *Current Opinion.* Thus any of the three models given will be

acceptable, provided a single method of arrangement be carefully adhered to throughout, so as to make all clear to the reader.

WILLIAM. I'll do this job, lass. Give and have. (*Takes her hand.*)

MAGGIE. What are you doing? You leave my wedding-ring alone.

WILLIAM. (*Following her.*) You've worn a brass one long enough, lass.

MAGGIE. I'll wear that ring forever, Will. (*Will puts his arm around her.*)

WILLIAM. I was for getting you a proper one, Maggie.

MAGGIE. I'm not preventing you. I'll wear the gold for show, but this brass one stays where you put it, Will, and if we get too rich and proud we'll just sit down together quiet and take a long look at it, so we'll not forget the truth about ourselves. (*Enter Hobson with his hat.*) Ready, father? Why, you're looking better already.

HOBSON. Ay, Maggie, when all's said, it's champion to have you about the house again.

MAGGIE. That's right, Father.

HOBSON. (*With a gleam of his old spirit.*) Will Mossop, you're a made man now I've taken you into partnership. Maggie, you come along of me to Albert Prosser. I reckon I'll lose no time in drawing up the deed. Come on, now, do as I bid you; I'm master 'ere. (*He goes out on Maggie's arm; she looks back and winks to Will.*)

WILLIAM. (*Beaming.*) Well, I don't know!

END.

3. *Simple Hints on Play Construction*

A play is a story, therefore consider your plot first of all as a story to be shown in action.

The theme should have as broad an appeal as possible. Keep the fundamental interests of humanity always before you.

The basis of the plot must be a struggle, "a clash of wills," that is worth observing both for its own sake and for the way it is carried on.

Two prime elements are situation and character—each must influence the other. Omit all that does not sustain this test.

There can be no play that does not deal vitally with some emotion in the characters.

Have few characters, and center interest in one or two of them. Let the others serve to bring out the central figures.

Unify the action by having one main line of interest and making everything contribute to that.

Don't pre-suppose too many events prior to the opening; and such as must be pre-supposed, make as clear as possible without awkwardly telling the audience. This is known as "the exposition."

Keep the action moving forward with enough speed to maintain interest. Don't stop and don't back-track.

The incidents must grow out of the situation and not simply be tacked on.

Suspense is maintained by handling the element of danger—moral, social, physical. The audience must be made to feel ardently how vital it is that dangers which threaten must in some way be turned to the advantage of the chief character, or sustained in a noble way.

Dialogue should contain few if any long speeches. Learn

to tell much by inference and the use of significant "business."

Each exit and entrance must have such a bearing on the action that the audience will be interested to know what effect it will have on the outcome.

The conclusion may well be faintly foreshadowed, yet the outcome kept so uncertain that interest does not wane. When the outcome does come it must satisfy expectation, yet the *means* of its accomplishment had better be such as to excite either surprise or admiration, or both.

If the play has a moral you need not tell it—it must be obvious from all that has been said and done.

QUESTIONS AND EXERCISES

1. Choosing a single dramatic form that suits your abilities and the probable chances of a market, try to find an example in a magazine.

2. Analyze it by outlining the plot or action and briefly describing the characters.

3. Suggest any betterments that occur to you.

4. Make a brief synopsis of the plot of an original piece of dramatic work for magazine use.

5. Briefly describe the setting, characters and costumes.

6. Write the opening action in full, giving attention to "business."

7. Complete the manuscript. From twenty to thirty typewritten pages will be enough for either a twenty-minute playlet or one full act.

CHAPTER XIII

EDITORIAL WORK

Some important parts of magazine writing—albeit unobtrusive parts mostly—are done in the editorial offices. Besides, there is much else of which the public never dreams.

1. The Editorial Staff and Its Duties

The editorial staff of many a small and good magazine consists of one man or woman, or two at most. The more elaborately organized force has at least seven, not counting department editors and minor assistants. Between these extremes are staffs of all sizes, each with its own peculiar division of labor.

In editorial organization the magazine differs from the newspaper as widely as the several magazines differ among themselves. Few magazines conform to a type, in the sense that most newspapers do, and practically no men and women can be trained to do a special kind of editorial work except by the repeated acts of doing it, therefore we must not expect to find in any given magazine office a group of editors who hold the same positions relatively that they do in other offices.

Further, each editor or sub-editor is pretty sure to be doing the work for which he or she is best fitted, and so it comes about that the duties presently to be outlined in a

formal way are oftener divided among a smaller group of assistants than committed to specific editors in sole charge of such departments. The lines cross and shift according to the magazine and the staff personnel.

(a) *The Editor-in-chief* maintains the character of the magazine according to the wishes of the owners. He directs the work of his assistants, originates or passes judgment on new ideas, keeps his finger on the pulse of his special public, makes arrangements—sometimes in person—with prominent or especially promising writers, tries to get for his magazine the work of coveted authors, agrees with suitable sub-editors to take up new departments, supervises the work of all department editors, passes upon such manuscript as is brought to him for decision by his subordinates, conducts a large correspondence, oversees the work of the make-up man, sees that the art editor is providing suitable covers and illustrations, writes an editorial page in many cases, keeps his eye open for new Kiplings, watches rival magazines, keeps friendly with the proper people, and in general sees that the magazine grows better month by month without spending too much money to get results!

For all this work the big magazines provide enough helpers to keep the editor on his feet, though often tottering, but on the smaller journals the amount of work the chief has to do is literally appalling.

But back of what the chief must do is what he must be. If there is anything a magazine editor ought not to know I have not heard of it, and when there is an obscure subject on which either he or a member of his staff is not posted

fate at once ordains that a manuscript will pass all his manuscript readers with that particular point twisted into a blunder.

(b) *The Managing Editor* has the duties assigned him by the chief. He is a sort of vice-president. For a very active editor he will be an *alter ego*, going where the chief is not able to go, seeing callers, doing executive work of all sorts, and oftenest co-ordinating the departments in such a way that results come for the responsible editor.

One of the prime duties of the managing editor in some offices is to plan the make-up of the magazine, or at least carry out the editor's wishes in this respect (see Make-up Editor). He must also serve as a buffer between the printing—usually called the manufacturing—department and the editorial office, for each department prefers to take all the time there is, at the expense of the other. The work of getting out a great magazine on time is a super-human task.

(c) *The Literary Editor* is the title given lately by some magazines to the chief of the literary department, or the head manuscript reader. His duty it is to manage the work of his helper or helpers so as to make reasonably sure that no promising new writer escapes notice either in the columns of other periodicals or as a contributor to his own. He must bring to his chief—though in some instances the final decision really lies with him as literary editor—such manuscript as ought to be accepted, or negotiated for, or corresponded about, or rejected only after more than the usual procedure. It is usually his duty to make up the "editors' sheets," which contain extracts from each issue

of the magazine and are sent out to the newspapers for review or advance notices. Obviously, these duties may be varied considerably according to the staff organization —and this applies to every other position named. He also revises manuscripts in such important particulars as would not be trusted to the copy editor (which see).

(d) *The Assistant Manuscript Reader* does the work indicated by his title. On large magazines there are more than one to do this exacting work. After each newly received manuscript is recorded—usually the date, title, name and address of the author, and the amount of postage enclosed are set down and a number is put on the envelope to show the reader in what order to take up the manuscripts. Sometimes a minor clerk attends to these matters of record.

As the reader goes over the manuscript of a poem, story or article, he has in mind, at least subconsciously, a number of questions by which each manuscript is brought to the test, for if the offering should fail in one or two vital points it is usually enough to condemn it; and of course the one ever-present standard is: Does this meet our present needs?

Questions like these are in the editorial mind: Is this manuscript illiterate? Is it quite out of tune with our magazine? Is it dull? Is it trite? Is it behind the times? Is it poorly written? Does it fail to do what it sets out to? Have we already published, or have we on hand, enough or too much of a similar sort? Is it quite too long? How does it compare with a similar manuscript we are now considering? Is it good enough to warrant further con-

sideration? Is the author promising enough to warrant our watching him, writing to him, asking for other material?

These and other questions, fitting the peculiar needs of each magazine, are part of the mental make-up of every alert manuscript editor, and in many instances it does not take long to determine either that a contribution is hopeless or that it should have further consideration.

As we all know, not all hopeless manuscripts are sent back forthwith, for now and then the work of the writer is good enough to warrant a letter from the editorial department; and of course there are many instances of manuscripts being held for further weighing and yet being found unavailable at last.

The managing editor, and the literary editor with his assistant readers, must more than any other members of the staff possess one quality—ability to look at all questions from a double view-point: their own and that of their chief. "All in all, I think he would like this," is a constant judgment that assistants are forming; less frequently one will decide: "The chief doesn't like this sort of stuff, but other magazines are using it successfully, it's in the air nowadays, it's well done, so I'll put it up to him with a strong recommendation."

(e) *The Art Editor* is not chiefly a literary person, but he must deal even more with words than with pictures. Consequently he keeps in close touch with the literary side of his magazine and is careful to secure not only striking and beautiful pictures but such as actually illustrate the text. We all know how ridiculous is the result when he fails.

The decorative head- and tail-pieces, borders and full-page decorations are of course in his charge also.

His work is not done with these duties, however, for he must deal with the engraver and the printer so as to get the best results. He also coöperates with the make-up editor in planning the pages of the magazine. Often the duties of art editor and those of make-up editor are combined.

(f) *The Copy Editor* on smaller magazines is usually given charge of some other work also, but in any division of labor his duties as copy editor are the same. He must go over all accepted manuscript, prepare titles and sub-titles; see that the authors' names, titles and achievments are correctly stated, spelled and placed, mark the styles of type for all headings and text, mark all spelling, punctuation, capitalization, abbreviation, and paragraphing which needs to be altered according to the office-rules of the magazine, watch for errors of all sorts in the manuscript, and take up with the chief or some other superior any question that may arise regarding an important change. In general, he must see that the manuscript goes to the composing room as absolutely perfect "copy."

(g) *The Head Proof Reader.* Magazines do not depend on the printing department for all the proof reading, but some member of the staff—usually the copy editor—reads th proof. First he reads it in "galleys," which are long strips of printed paper, called "galley proof" because the proof-impression has been made on the paper directly from the long tray-like galleys which hold the type before it has been made up into pages.

While the galley proofs are being read the manuscript copy is sometimes read aloud by a "copy holder," usually a minor employee. As a rule this reading of copy aloud is done in the printing office only.

After the type matter has been put into page form—of which more in a moment—the page proof is read in the editorial offices, and generally a final proof, or revise, is also read. These several readings are in addition to the proof readings given in the printing department.

(h) *The Make-up Editor* has a difficult task on magazines which use illustrations that cut into the text, for not only must he see that the lay-out for illustration and text is fit and harmonious, but he must often, just before the magazine goes to press, cut an article or even a story so as to make up the pages individually and as a whole in an effective way. All this requires taste, magazine training, quickness and adaptability. The task of shortening articles is not so frequent since the advent of the annoying custom of finishing an article among the advertising columns.

On at least one of the largest American magazines the managing editor is also the head make-up man. On some large weeklies a special make-up man is employed. In other organizations his duties cover the make-up work on several magazines, while in yet others the managing editor depends largely on the make-up man in the printing office.

(i) *The Departmental or Special Editor.* The peculiar needs of various magazines open a large number of special posts to competent workers.

Many magazines run departments in charge of an editor whose name is "one to conjure with," in editorial parlance. This editor is rarely resident with the staff, but may live anywhere, though it is obviously convenient to have a department editor who can come to the office for frequent conferences. Sometimes only part of the page or department is done by the editor whose portrait and name are its adornment, the bulk of the material being gathered by the regular editorial staff or by minor helpers.

Other magazines need editors for special work quite different from any duties thus far outlined. Current event periodicals need digests of the news and other important matters, clippings from journals suitable for comment, book reviews,[1] reviews of matters on which the magazine specializes, and actual editorials. Class magazines need editors for the revising, rewriting and condensing of news and information-items, the preparation of interviews and departmental material, and as many different types of work as our multiform magazines make necessary.

2. *Qualifications of an Editor*

After having outlined the duties of the various members of an editorial staff I need not dwell on the endowments and training required to do the work of an editor. It is literally impossible to set out by preparing for only one of the lines of work necessary in an editorial office. Natural

[1] Since book reviewing is done almost exclusively by members of the staff, there are no lucrative openings in this field for contributors. When a book is sent to some specialist for review a small honorarium may be paid, but the few quasi outside workers who receive books usually get their pay by retaining the book.

and acquired fitness in at least three or four are indispensable, and gradually all or nearly all must be mastered.

Each member of an editorial staff who has any responsibility for the selecting of material for publication must know what is good in his own type of literature and *why* it is good. He must also know what is popular and have at least a shrewd suspicion of the reason. He must be familiar with what the magazines—particularly those in his own line and near it—have been doing for years, what changes of policy have taken place and *why*, what magazines have failed and *why*, what ones have succeeded most largely and *why*, what class of readers each appeals to, and, in general, he must understand *the magazine business*, especially as it touches his own kind of magazine. WHY is a big word in his vocabulary.

He must realize that circulation, advertising and editorial material bear vital relations to each other, therefore he must know a great deal about how circulation is gained, maintained and increased, and advertising likewise. He must know the principles of literary technique and be able to write good prose. He must know all about the preparation of manuscript for the printer, understand a good deal about type, composition and good printing, and know how to read proof rapidly yet accurately. If his magazine uses illustrations he must know about methods of engraving and the management of inks and papers, for not many magazines can afford an art editor.

Besides all this is the question of his knowledge of life and its myriad affairs, and his ability to turn his hand,

after a little training, to any one of the positions just described which may be combined with his own.

Now if you add the endowments of common sense, human feeling, patience, the sense of what people like, and the capacity for making very few mistakes while despatching a vast amount of work, you have a pretty fair editor in embryo—nothing but experience will ever mature him or her into a really good one.

3. How Editorial Positions are Attained

Every year are graduated from the colleges a thousand and one young men and women who, because the professor of rhetoric has praised their work, would consent, if properly urged, to edit some great magazine. These form the first line of "availables." Most of them "would be willing to accept a position"—that is the formula—as assistant editor. Two or three would be glad to get a job as copy holder—and these are more promising subjects for future McClures, Hapgoods and Lorimers than the rest of the thousand. This is sober truth.

Then comes the main army, chiefly spinsters, who want an editorial position because they have always been fond of reading. These are supported by a huge reserve of wrist-watch boys who would like "a nice clean profession"—without being willing to train to fill the post. Finally we have the camp followers—failures in other work who know it is easy to pick out stories because their friends have always praised their literary judgment.

As a matter of fact, editors are rarely chosen from appli-

cants who come fresh from college or private life. To begin with, there are not nearly enough staff editorial positions to go around—perhaps three thousand in America, not including the newspapers. Here are some of the ways in which these positions have actually been reached:

The editor has filled a staff vacancy by appointing the non-resident editor of a department.

The editor's secretary has shown such good judgment, and so worked to master the editorial duties, that she or he has won a staff appointment.

A keen proof reader in the printing department has been brought over into the editorial rooms to edit copy, and climbs on up.

A college journalist who has "made good" on his magazine or paper is chosen.

A stenographer or clerk has shown ability to do better editorial work than a member of the staff. Such chances are occurring constantly.

A successful contributor to the magazine is taken on the staff temporarily and makes a place for himself.

The proprietor's son or niece is given a chance—and sometimes succeeds.

An editor gets a higher position on a rival magazine so that the publisher may get inside information of the rival's methods.

A graduate of a school of journalism is offered a small opening.

A circulation man who is well educated and observant shows that he knows what the people want and is given an editorial position.

An advertising man gets the same chance.

A college professor, a clergyman or a lawyer who has long been doing odd bits of journalistic work wins a post.

An investor buys an interest in a magazine, and with it an editor's desk.

A newspaper man comes from that field.

The editor of an obscure little magazine—perhaps an amateur journalist—shows striking ability and is chosen.

A personal application *may* be made just at the time when an embarrassing vacancy occurs and the applicant be given a chance.

This list of openings could be expanded indefinitely, only to show that it is just about hopeless to look for an editorial position unless you are willing to learn *before* you apply for the place. Millions are willing to learn—but at the publisher's expense. You must—either while serving in a clerical position or in some work that brings you into close touch with editorial duties—master the details of *commercial* literary criticism, editorial conduct, and manuscript preparation, all the while that you are building up your mental grasp. Then you will be justified in asking for a chance.

The rewards of editorial work, sad to say, are not large. A few great editors receive relatively large salaries; perhaps fifty others are paid from four to five thousand dollars a year, and this includes the editors of technical journals; a much larger group draw fifty dollars a week; while the rest trail down to unmentionable sums.

However, the editor's life in the main is one of intellectual expansion, brings association with interesting

people, and ranks him among professional folk. Certainly it is worth while fitting oneself thoroughly for this work, for the knowledge and skill gained will always be of practical value in the work of authorship, even if a suitable editorial opening does not occur. It must be remembered, however, that it is not possible to prepare for an editorial career in anything like the direct way in which one gets ready for medicine or the law. One may indeed get into line for the work by such preparation as I have already outlined, and then look out for an opening, but there can be no certainty that the door will open—or even that you can wisely push it open. Magazine editorial work is a sort of post-graduate career following upon any one of a dozen or more allied callings. Success in one of these, and special preparation for the editor's tasks, may some day swing a vacant swivel chair toward you.

CHAPTER XIV

POINTS ON PREPARING MANUSCRIPT

If you credit the word of those who know, it pays abundantly to offer only manuscript that is in creditable form. A self-respecting writer dresses his writings as decently as himself. The editor will accept your manuscript at your own valuation, until a reading proves the contrary. Correlate these facts for yourself.

1. Revising the Manuscript

To revise is to look over again—so that the rested eye may catch errors unseen at first; to re-weigh statements; to test the value of arrangement; to seek for flaws of word-meaning, word-arrangement, sentence-structure, sentence-arrangement, paragraphic form, or paragraphic sequence; to sit back and get the general effect—in short, to comb the composition, in parts and as a whole, to discover how it may be improved.

The manuscript that is not worth polishing was not worth writing. How can I say this with enough force to impress inexperienced writers! For an editor who loves to see a good thing well done it is painful to see how careless most writers are. When you gently call attention to omitted periods and commas, dashes used indiscriminately, slovenly spelling, indention of paragraphs ignored or crazily irregular, type keys packed with dirt, wrong

letters not erased, soiled paper, or any other offense against neatness, they open wide their eyes as though to say, "Are editors silly enough to notice little things like that?"

Yet for a generation friendly advisers have been trying to make it clear that trifles often have a direct bearing on the meaning of an article, and they certainly do have a ponderable part in that general effect on an editor which subtly moves him for or against acceptance. It matters not a particle whether you believe this or not—it is true; the statement is based on the experience of many editors. Of course, this is not to say that an otherwise acceptable manuscript will be rejected because of minor errors, but it is to affirm that carelessness—for instance, in the points named in the preceding paragraph—always weigh against its approval and sometimes definitely cast the balance against it. Be just to your thoughts and dress them well. You can teach yourself to revise your work both in detail and in major points if you are willing to try honestly. To begin with, read your "finished" work aloud, so that the ear may detect mistakes which the eye has missed.

2. *The Value of Typewritten Manuscript*

Mr Arthur T. Vance, for years editor of *Woman's Home Companion*, and now editor of *Pictorial Review*, writes as follows in *The Writer's Monthly*:

"The average young writer doesn't seem to understand why editors demand typewritten manuscripts, and this applies not only to beginners, but some of the old-timers who ought to know better.

"The objection from the editorial point of view to hand-written manuscripts is well taken. It is not only because hand-writing is hard to read, but because the author doesn't give himself a fair chance. This may sound strange, but it is true, and can be explained on a mechanical basis. When you read a typewritten line, just as when you read a printed line, the eye does not stop to read it letter by letter, or even word by word. The skilled reader takes in the whole line, ofttimes two or three lines, at a glance. The reading is made easy, and the mind more readily grasps the effect or the impression the author is striving for. On the other hand, when you read hand-written manuscripts, you have to read every word separately and frequently have to spell out the words letter by letter. It is so laborious a task that the illusion is almost certain to be lost. It is just the same as when you studied Latin in school. Old Virgil wrote some fine stories —interesting, inspiring, thrilling—but when you had to translate a word at a time, it became a bore—a task—and you got so you hated the sight of the book. You didn't appreciate the story of it at all.

"I hope the young writers, and the old writers, will see my point. I would say offhand, that a manuscript which is typewritten has five times the chances of being accepted and published that a hand-written one has."

As an aid to composition most writers have found the typewriter invaluable—a small minority have not, and I am among this minority. Many advantages are claimed for this method, but these must be brought to the test of experience. Whatever the result in this regard, it is certain that any writer who hopes to do much work should own, or at least operate, a type machine. To see one's own work in approximately the form in which prospective readers are to see it is in itself an aid to self-criticism, and if one thinks of newspaper journalism as a career there is simply no doing without the typewriter.

3. Preparing the Manuscript

Use white paper, letter size (8½ x 11), and be sure that it is not transparent.

Never use single space in typing, and double space is better than triple—except for the first draft, on which you need room for marking revisions.

Leave proportionately as large margins on all sides of the type page as you see on this printed page. At the top of the first page leave a wider margin than usual.

Do not use a copying ribbon on your typewriter; it smudges, and also stains the hands, and sometimes the clothing, of the one who reads.

If you must use a pen, it is absolute folly to write in a small hand, to crowd the page, or to write on both sides of the sheet. Few editors will look twice at such a manuscript.

It useless to submit pencil-written manuscript unless you have an understanding with the editor. The exceptions to this rule are negligible.

Study any magazine page to see how paragraphs should be set in from the left hand margin of the page—about one inch, in manuscript.

Be particularly careful to begin each new speech by a different speaker in dialogue with a new paragraph. Do not bother with the exception to this rule until you have mastered the practice.

If one speaker should continue his speaking over into a new paragraph, do not put quotation marks at the *end* of the former paragraph, but place them at the opening of

each paragraph containing that one speech; then be sure to put "quotes" at the point where his speaking ends. The principle is that it is absolutely essential to the proper understanding of dialogue for the reader to see without the slightest effort when one speaker ends, or another begins, or the author makes his own comment.

If you have occasion to alter your typing *slightly* by pen it is not necessary to recopy it, but many or large corrections and additions should be typed and inserted in the proper place. If these additions take up only a few lines and the page is thus made longer, fold the sheet at the bottom to the normal length of page. It is better, however, to add a new page and renumber all the pages, even though any one page may not be full.

When you wish to alter a word be sure to mark out the discarded word, place under it a caret (∧) and with extreme care write in exactly above it the new word. This illustrates why double spacing is necessary in typing.

If you change the name of a character in a story be sure to change it consistently all through. Neglect of this precaution is sure to prove confusing to the manuscript reader and may make your story so unintelligible as to cause its rejection.

Do not use abbreviations, but spell out words like "Doctor," "Senior," "cents," "New Jersey," and "Captain."

Spell out all numbers not used in a statistical way.

These are only a few points—for fuller instruction you should consult a book on manuscript preparation; but

care and common sense are good guides if you are keen to observe how magazine pages are set up.

Fold a letter-size sheet twice, thus leaving three equal parts of the paper in folds. Positively never roll the paper.

Many, though not all, editors prefer that short manuscript should not be permanently fastened or bound. Most literary agencies, however, and a few authors, cover and bind their short manuscripts by cutting a peice of heavy paper, dark and not easily torn, to a size 12 x 8½. The entire back of the manuscript is covered, the extra inch folded over the top, and the whole riveted through the top front margin. If you adopt this plan, be careful in typing your story to leave enough margin so that the binding edge may not hide the slightest part of the top line, or even make it hard to read. But whatever form of binding you adopt—I personally advise against using any—never use pins.

It is quite safe to say that long manuscripts should not be bound unless thay are bound in *small* and *numbered* sections. Suppose, for instance, you handled several novel manuscripts in a single day—would it not be easier for you to glance at them sheet by sheet and lay the sheets aside rather than sit for seven hours literally *forcing* open pages of stiffly or eccentrically bound "books"? Professional writers do not bind their manuscripts. Why should you?

It is useless and laughable to decorate a manuscript with ribbons, crude drawings, and the like. These are the earmarks of eccentric amateurism.

The first page of either bound or unbound short manu-

scripts may be kept clean by adding an extra sheet of letterpaper bearing precisely the same wording as you place at the top of the title page. Do not number this fly leaf sheet. The last page should be blank, to help keep the manuscript clean.

Be sure to number (folio) the sheets from first to last, and not merely by chapters. Suppose an editor should inadvertently drop your manuscript at the same moment that a gay breeze blew in his window. This has frequently happened.

Do not fail to keep a carbon copy of your manuscript, and note on it all your revisions. Almost all editors are very careful of proffered material; a very few, however, are conscienceless. Besides, mail bags are sometimes destroyed.

Use large and *strong* envelopes for sending out manuscript. Many a contribution reaches the editor in a soiled condition because the flimsy envelope has been torn in transit.

It is far better to enclose a stamped, self-addressed, tough envelope for the possible return of material, but if you really cannot do this, send stamps—if you do not, you are not likely to see your manuscript again. Stamps may be enclosed in oiled paper or in a small envelope, or they may be inserted in slits made in a piece of stiff paper. It is not desirable to paste parts of the stamps on either the letter or the manuscript, unless the stamps are attached by the little strips of unprinted but gummed paper which come on the edges of stamp sheets. The postal clerk will give you stamps off the edge if you ask him—with a smile.

Do not pin or clip stamps to your letter, and in no circumstances put them in the outer envelope loose.

Be sure to prepay all postage fully, at letter rates. Manuscript positively may not legally be sent by parcel post. Some packages may slip by, but the practice is dishonest, and may cause trouble in the end.

It is a good plan to stamp your name and address in very small type on each sheet.

At the top of the first page of your manuscript place the following information:

Submitted by
Henry L. Potter, 2500 words.
136 Drew St.,
Binghamton, N. Y.

MR. ULYSSES OF ITHACA
BY HENRY L. POTTER

In estimating the number of words, count several lines on the average page in order to average the number of words to the line. Multiply by the number of lines in the page, and then by the number of pages. Count the short lines as though they were full, and estimate carefully.

CHAPTER XV

HOW MANUSCRIPTS ARE MARKETED

Intelligent marketing is scarcely less important than efficient writing, for in the great number of instances the successful writer has had in mind from the beginning the general if not the specific market for which he is producing a particular piece of work. The only exceptions are those works of art which are literally inspired—and they are exceptional in every respect. It is not alone in finding a market that most inexperienced writers fail, but in planning for it.

1. *Four Ways of Marketing*

(a) *Calling on the editor* should always be an exceptional practice. The writer of importance is welcome in an editorial office—if he is not a bore—but the tyro had better stay away, for his call is likely to be merely an interruption. These are hard words but honest. An editor's time must be as carefully conserved as that of the surgeon to whom he has sometimes been compared. There are very few proposals which a writer may not make more effectively in writing than by word of mouth. An editor's stock in trade is his judgment, and he prefers to exercise it not in the presence of the writer, so in most instances a personal call can serve no good business purpose.

Once in a long while an editor may suggest in an interview a special want which will open the way to a market,

but it is only reasonable to suppose that such "tips" will be reserved for writers whose work is known. There have been cases, too, in which the personality of the writer has so impressed the editor that a valuable opening has followed, but these are too exceptional to make the personal call really valuable in the long run for the beginner. If the editor is glad to see a lovely woman it is because he is human—not because he is an editor. He would soon be hunting a new chair if he allowed charming faces to sell him inferior manuscripts.

A letter of introduction will usually procure an interview, though even then the results are rarely of importance to either editor or writer. Speaking generally, only a lesser member of the editorial staff is open to callers—the time of a busy editor is of money value to his employers and "the chief" knows that, with all his desire to help young writers, he cannot afford to spend much time in explaining wants which may be inferred from the pages of his magazine, or in instructing novices when helpful handbooks and reliable schools give much more detailed information than he could convey in a month of interviews.

Of course the sensible reader will see that all such advice must be weighed and discarded or adopted with discrimination. Rules have been known to have exceptions. Yet the prudent person will not begin by considering himself as exceptional—if he does so he must be prepared either to demonstrate his conviction or to meet with rebuffs. These words of counsel are based on the experiences of many editors and writers, and to fly in the face of good practice is to accept a handicap. It may be best to do so, but the

chances are largely in favor of him who considers the experiences of others.

(b) *Using a friend as intermediary* has in unusual circumstances proved of help, yet, just as with the letter of introduction used to get an interview, this course is oftener a drawback. An editor secretly stiffens, beneath a suave exterior, the moment he feels that a lever is being used to lift a new writer into his magazine. And is not this attitude perfectly reasonable? He must make merit the sole open sesame or in that far he is an inefficient editor. The utmost that mediation can procure is precisely what the editor is paid to give without mediation—the fair consideration of a manuscript. It is hopeless to try to convince many young writers that manuscripts *are* fairly weighed by all decent magazines, but this is a true statement nevertheless. A woman who knows that she does not want a piece of Malta lace is not under obligation to give up her housekeeping time to look over the wares of a Syrian peddler, and an editor usually knows at a glance whether what is offered is worth further consideration. If writers spent more time in preparing the right material for the right markets they would spend less time on the "pull" side of the swinging door and get on the "push" side.

(c) *The literary agent* is often useful in handling really salable material, especially in making foreign sales through his English house, but all his experience and knowledge do not make it possible for him to place any other than really good manuscripts. Most young writers who want an agent do not produce marketable manuscripts. They have tried—vainly and not very wisely—to sell their literary wares and

then conclude that because they live away from the great cities they are handicapped—which is in itself a fallacy—and that literary agents must know secret ways for making editors disgorge fat checks. Nothing could be farther from the truth. Still other beginners conceive the original idea that an agent is a good substitute for paying postage. They abhor the necessity for buying many stamps and prefer that an agent should take this risk in their stead.

The truth is that reliable and efficient literary agents in the United States are not legion but may be counted literally on the fingers of one hand. Writers of ability who produce considerable material and who are unwilling to undertake the work—for it is work—of both studying markets and offering their writings here and abroad, may profitably employ an agent, particularly for novels, serials, and short-stories. I know of many such instances. I have, however, never known of a case in which mediocre material was successfully handled continuously by an agent. It is quite true that a good representative knows markets and can find openings which are unknown to the average writer. It is also true that he usually gets fair prices for what he sells. What is more, he will act as a literary and business adviser for a writer whose work is succeeding and often thus develop him rapidly. Yet many writers gain the same results without resorting to help—by following with common sense the sort of methods suggested in the rest of this chapter.

All reliable agents must charge a reading fee before undertaking to handle a manuscript. If they did not, the

tax on their time would be prohibitive. Some are willing to send out unusually promising material at their own expense, but most require a postage deposit, and rightly. All, of course, charge a commission on sales—from ten to fifteen per cent is a fair average—and arrange the contract, collect from the publisher, and account to the author—promptly, if they are honest.

It is the custom of many tricky agents to suggest literary revision—for a fee—in the case of nearly every manuscript that comes in. Two or three reliable agents make similar suggestions when in their opinions the manuscript would be helped by revision. Needless to say, this is an honest scheme only when the material actually needs criticism or revision and when it shows promise of an eventual sale. Suspect the motives of any agent who seems more concerned about getting revision fees than he is about effecting sales.

Most editors are willing—if a stamped addressed envelope is enclosed—to suggest the name of a trustworthy agent, but it cannot be emphasized too strongly that *it is utterly hopeless to ask an agent to handle work that is not above the ordinary. Positively he cannot sell it.*

(d) *The U. S. Mail* offers in almost every case the best way to sell manuscript. Whether you wish to sell to a single periodical or to or through a syndicate,[1] more successful marketing, by ten to one, is done by mail than through any other medium.

[1] *Journalism and Journalistic Writing*, by Ernest Newton Bagg, with chapters by J. Berg Esenwein and Brett Page—a forthcoming volume of "The Writer's Library"—will contain a full section on writing for syndication.

2. *How to Study Markets*

(a) *Examining the magazines* is obviously the first step in gaining a first-hand knowledge of their needs. Public Libraries, news stands, and the library tables of friends may be used in supplementing the larger or smaller collection of copies you have personally. Many periodicals will send free a sample back number for four cents to cover postage. If you ask for a sample, frankly say that you are a writer—do not at the same time ask for an advertising rate card, unless you are general (magazine) advertiser. Magazines maintain costly propaganda to get new advertisers, so it is not fair to mislead them into following up a fictitious prospect. A later paragraph suggests how market information may be collected by making a study of the magazines and preserving the record for use.

(b) *A collection of magazines* is rather easily made if one can give them accessible storage space. Three copies of each magazine are ten times the value of one for showing the tone and general contents. Recent magazines are often procurable for a trifle at secondhand stalls and if your friends know of your purpose many will help by giving you little-known journals. Your business acquaintances take trade papers—ask to see them. It must be remembered, however, that very old issues will not show current needs.

(c) *Collect tables of contents* of as many different magazines as you can, if you cannot give up the room to a collection of full magazine specimens. On these contents pages

you may pencil such information as may help you to recall the length and kind of material used.

(d) Infer from quotations from the magazines made in newspapers and the digests the sort of material different periodicals print. It is easy to make and preserve cuttings from these sources.

(e) *A card index or a notebook record* of the following information will prove valuable if kept up-to-date:

(*1*) **The exact names of magazines and their addresses.** It is surprising how many contributions are addressed inaccurately, and even to the wrong city. An offering directed to *The Ladies' Home Journal*, New York, would indeed be forwarded to Philadelphia, but a paragraph intended for *The Popular Science Monthly* would not reach its destination if the sender had omitted the word *Science*.

(*2*) **Kinds of material used.** Here again it is amazing to see how little knowledge is shown in sending out material. Cuttings of specimen paragraphs pasted on the card or in the notebook will serve as an example of the average length of items used and the form of statement apparently preferred by the magazine. Larger cuttings, of course, are also valuable but in a lesser degree.

(*3*) **Rates of payment.** These are not always available, but are occasionally stated in the magazines. Editors will sometimes—but not always—give definite information as to rates, if the request is accompanied by a stamped addressed envelope. In fact, most magazines have only a minimum rate and pay according to the value of material to them.

Experience, too—your own and that of others—will help make this record more complete. The market departments of magazines for writers also give this information in certain instances. Since periodicals often change their policies, acquaintance with the character of material used should be renewed as often as possible by looking over the latest copies obtainable.

(f) *Printed helps.* Besides the several handbooks that list the markets for literary material, there are several writers' periodicals which contain departments devoted to the latest news of magazine markets, reports of literary prize contests, and changes in the magazine field. Chief among these are *The Editor*, Ridgewood, N. J.; *The Writer*, Boston, Mass.; *The Bulletin of the Authors' League of America*, New York; and *The Writer's Monthly*,[1] Springfield, Mass.

Nearly every newspaper office owns a copy of a late newspaper directory—an annual containing in geographical arrangement, and in classes, the names and addresses of thousands of newspapers and magazines. This book will cheerfully be shown you if you ask. It is of great value. If you have access to the offices of an advertising agency you will be sure to find there also various printed lists of periodicals. Of course these directories contain no statements of market requirements.

(g) *Association with writers* will often be the means of getting and giving market information. Little clubs of literary workers may be made especially helpful.

[1] Edited by the author of this book.—THE PUBLISHERS.

3. Utilizing Market Knowledge

(a) *Adaptability* is the first requisite for success in magazine writing. Goldsmith was a literary hack. Stevenson wrote on a surprising variety of subjects. Eugene Field did "space writing" for years. Kipling began his career as a journalist and wrote on everything. How often must the neophyte be told that he cannot begin at the top—except it be the top floor of a lodging house, and that need not be a disaster. The trifling single dollars and small checks for versicles, jests and information-items will mount to a respectable sum if you are alert to furnish what *many* editors want. For years American merchants made little impression on South American marts because they did not furnish their goods in precisely the way the buyers wished. The same futile ineptitude holds back many writers. Literally, *anyone* who has intelligence and can write plain English can sell to the magazines and sell often—though not nearly everyone can sell fiction, long articles, drama and poetry. Be adaptable. Study not only the contents of each magazine physically, but grasp its *tone*—that is really half the secret of suiting an editor. Everything must be grist for the writer's grinding—and everything must be ground, fine or course, as readers like. The many-sided writer will be the writer of many acceptances. By and by comes the next step:

(b) *Specializing.* All the while that you are gathering "little" things to write—a storiette of seven hundred words for a newspaper, a syndicate, or a popular magazine, the report of a unique aëroplane for a scientific magazine, a

recipe for curing automobile engine troubles, for almost any periodical, a plan for an entertainment for a woman's journal, an anecdote for a big monthly—what not—you can be gravitating toward your ultimate self, finding your specialty.

That specialty, of course, need not be a life work. In your locality you may become a (not *the*) correspondent for a magazine—or a class of magazines—by sending in so much acceptable material that they will naturally look to you for that sort of thing when an order is going out. You may so completely master a fresh field—new ones come into being quickly these days—that you will be recognized as writing with authority. The story of extracting crude oil from Utah and Colorado shale will make a feature article, but in the writing of that article a dozen by-product "editorials," articles and items will be found suitable for other periodicals. Only see that each article or item is handled from a different angle and your markets will multiply.

Yesterday a young man said to me, "I am writing advertising, but I have an eye turned to fiction writing, which is going to be my big work by and by." Thus adaptability, versatility, is to serve specialty—fiction is to be an avocation until it may wisely become a vocation. To do this he will utilize his present market opportunities, and gain pen-facility day by day.

(c) *Forecasting popular interest.* By this I do not mean timeliness, but the greater matter of making a shrewd estimate of what the public is going to be interested in. The song writer argues that it is about time for a fresh in-

terest, or the revival of one long dead. The writer must do the same—and he can. The moment one wave mounts to its crest he must not alone prepare for its decline but presage the crest of the next wave. To know the past and the present—important prerequisites!—fits one to predict the future. Be up with the times, ahead of the times—but not so far ahead as to be unintelligible. Great inventors are not content to fill the proverbial long-felt want—they invent for what the people will want tomorrow, and make them want it.

(d) *Inventing markets.* The writer must continually be a merchant—he must sell the buyer not alone what he has been used to buying but something new. Would a magazine be brightened by a department which you are well qualified to write or conduct, suggest it—and send a *full* sample of what you can do. Is an editor catering to yesterday's demand, show him how to please the people of today and tomorrow. Don't tell him—*show* him. Is there sure to be a growing demand for information which no magazine now gives but which you possess or can get, invent a means of giving that information popularly. There are scores of openings in the magazine field—waiting to be pried open. The trouble is that thousands of writers are trying to push into niches already jammed full of fixtures.

Who, do you suppose, invents all the ideas for new departments in the magazines? Not always the editors, by any means. Let no one say the periodicals are overstocked with writers so long as a fresh magazine idea is born every day.

(e) *The photograph as an adjunct of writing.* Only a

little space can be given to this market suggestion, but the mere idea should prove a fruitful one. True, more photographs are sold without accompanying articles than with them, but the writer who can send a clear snapshot of an object he describes takes the inside track Human-interest pictures are best—a strange animal with a child in the same picture is better than either alone. Buildings, inventions, natural scenery, catastrophes, decorations—invest them all with human interest if you would make your camera help your pen work. Think of the sectional, real estate, outing, travel, farming, domestic, popular science, and other periodicals, to say nothing of the dailies and the illustrated weeklies—newspaper and magazine—which use photographic material. Some require only a line of description, others a mere breezy title, while others buy one or two hundred words of text—but the market is large. [1]

In sending photographs be sure to pack them safe from breakage, use a shiny print, and write on the back, "Please return to Miriam Robinson, 92 Ardmore St., Hartford, Conn."—or "words to that effect."

(f) *Foreign markets* do not offer wide openings nor many, yet there is a chance for the American writer. A good literary agent can best serve a successful writer, but he will rarely offer abroad the work of the inexperienced unless it is quite exceptional. At the same time, it is quite possible for the writer to market his own work. [2]

[1] See Footnote 2, page 47.

[2] *The Writer's Monthly*, Springfield, Mass., prints in its September, 1916, number a very full list of British markets, so far as conditions made by the war permitted.

American settings had better not be emphasized in stories offered abroad—the locale of a great city, for instance, is enough for a city story. The British magazines are more hospitable to tales of adventure than to complicated plots; boys' stories are in demand; and crisp notes of events of international interest, accompanied by photographs, are always in demand by the great illustrated weeklies.

Instead of enclosing American stamps for the return of manuscript go to the post office and buy an international postal coupon to cover the full amount.

4. The Best Practice in Marketing

Keep a manuscript record. On page 57 is an article fully describing a good system.

Do not send out your carbon copy if you can avoid it. It is usually less easily read, and editors are likely to suspect that the material is being offered to more than one magazine at the same time—a thing which should never be done as it may lead to unpleasant complications. Editors abhor the practice.

Do not send out soiled manuscript—it makes editors feel that the manuscript has been the rounds, and they are human enough to wonder if what others editor do not like may after all contain weaknesses which their own eyes have failed to detect.

As soon as you have an acceptance do not flood the same journal with other manuscript.

It is better not to offer more than one full-length manuscript at a time to one editor.

Letters to editors should be short, or omitted entirely. Writers prejudice their chances by writing long letters, particularly letters of explanations as to how the story or article came to be written, reasons why the writer needs the money, and catalogues of private woes.

Wait at least a month before asking for a report on your manuscript—preferably, wait longer. Often, delay means special consideration; some editors, however, are simply slow; others are occasionally human enough to be ill or take a vacation and your manuscript may be awaiting the verdict of the chief. Delays are exasperating and some magazines do not treat writers fairly in this respect, but most editors are glad to decide on material as quickly as possible. It no more pays for a writer to write abrupt, not to say irritable, letters to an editor than it does for a salesman to quarrel with a merchant who does not buy from him.

To send a manuscript to an editor by name and mark the letter "personal" not only will fail to guarantee a personal reading by that editor but may delay any reading of the manuscript until the editor returns from an absence.

If you propose a series, send two or three specimen numbers—quite enough to make the editor absolutely sure that he knows what he is buying.

It is better not to set a price on your manuscript, though a few well-known writers do. Most, however, do not. If you are not content to offer your manuscript "at regular rates," courteously ask the editor to make an offer for your manuscript. It is far better for the beginner to accept the regular rates of the magazine, and send no more manu-

script if the check is not satisfactory. This assumes, of course, that the regular price is within reason. It is not uncommon for young writers to set a preposterous valuation on their writings.

It only cheapens a manuscript in an editor's eyes to have it offered "for half price"—or even without compensation, as is often done. This, of course, applies only to prosperous periodicals that pay for their material.

Many editors refuse to read any further in a manuscript several of whose leaves have been designedly misplaced or lightly stuck together, so that the writer may discover if the whole manuscript has been read. Never permit yourself to use this ancient device.

If you call on the editor, do not ask him to read your manuscript while you wait; and do not forget to leave return postage with your manuscript—every day editors receive manuscript by messenger or in person from those who apparently forget the return stamps.

It is a good plan to number all small items, such as jokes, so that your record may be easily kept. Inaccurate records have led many writers to offer material already sold to another magazine.

Material for special issues and suitable for particular seasons should be offered from four to six months in advance. The weeklies consider material a shorter time in advance of publication than the monthlies.

Do not ask the editor to give you a criticism of your manuscript—he will volunteer criticism if he thinks a few suggestions will help you to revise the story so that he may use it. Editors would like to help you, but it would take

all their time if they gave specific reasons for rejecting the thousands of manuscripts read yearly.

The following advice is quoted from "Writing the Short-Story," by the present author:

"Don't let the printed rejection slip humiliate you. Really great writers get them, constantly. It would take too much time and money for an editorial staff to write personal letters to all who offer unsolicited manuscript.

"Don't load up your envelope with printed notices of your privately-published book, your lecture, or any sort of personal advertisement. They will all go to the wastebasket unread. The editor is concerned only with your story. If that is good, he may accept it in spite of your previous literary offenses. There is some excuse for a writer's saying in his letter, 'This month's *Scribner's* contains a story of mine, and I send you another in the same vein.' The editor likes to know that, for he may prefer an accepted author, under certain conditions, and may have overlooked your story in the other magazine, though usually he glances over 'all the periodicals'—and always reads those in his own line.

"Remember that stories too similar to those lately published are as likely to prove unavailable as those which are too different in general tone.

"Err rather upon the side of brevity than of length.

"Don't be discouraged if your story comes back. Reread it, and if you are quite sure it is the best you can do, send it out again, using your best judgment as to the magazine to which it seems suited. If it comes back again, lay it aside for another reading when it will be fresh again. If you see anything wrong then, bravely rectify it and send it out once more. Many a story has been sold on its tenth, yes, its twentieth trip. But it is a waste of postage and patience and editorial brain to keep on sending inferior material to magazines which are plainly too critical to accept loosely constructed work."

It is not right to offer material that has been printed in whole or in part before, unless you say so definitely.

If you offer a manuscript without specifying what rights

are offered, and endorse for collection the publisher's check in payment, you thereby sell all your rights in the manuscript. If you wish to sell "first magazine rights only"—sometimes called "first serial rights," meaning the right to print in that magazine—and no other rights are offered, you must say so specifically, either on the *face* of your manuscript or in your letter, and better in both, otherwise confusion and possible loss will arise. There is much difference in practice in reserving for the author second serial rights (sometimes called "syndicate rights"), book rights, photoplay rights, dramatic rights, foreign rights, and translation rights, instead of selling to the publisher all rights. Experience only can guide you. Some magazines refuse to buy any material to which they do not acquire all rights; others are willing to specify precisely what rights they are buying and what rights are reserved by the author; while still other publishers are willing, if requested, to copyright the material on publication in the name of the publisher but promise to assign later to the author all rights other than first magazine, or "serial," rights. In general, it may be said that most publishers are willing at once to concede book rights to the writer, but many magazines are not so ready to give up moving picture rights. It must be remembered, however, that comparatively few short-stories and serial stories are salable for photoplay production. In case of doubt it is best to take advice. Most young writers are too glad to get magazine checks to make them anxious to quarrel over a remote chance for future profit. In any case, examine carefully the wording and the meaning of the receipt offered you to sign.

Members of the Authors' League of America, 33 West 42nd Street New York (dues $10.00 yearly), are advised by that organization not to sign any contract with a publisher which has not first been submitted to the legal department of the League for inspection. Any writer may join this useful organization.

Contracts are made only for the sale of longer literary work, such as book material, plays, photoplays, and shorter work in series.

Writers must not expect to receive as large pay for material to which they have sold only the first magazine, or serial, rights as when all rights have been acquired by the publisher.

No article, poem or piece of fiction may be copyrighted before publication, but the author may regain the copyright by arrangement with the publisher, in the way just explained.

APPENDIX A

A Digest of the Principles of Prose Writing

I. Diction—The Right Use of Right Words

(*a*) *Pure Words*

1. Avoid obsolete words, like *whilom*.
2. Purely local and slang words had better either be quoted or confined to dialogue; as *heft*, for *weight* or *bulk;* or *fake*, for *fraud*.
3. Rarely use a foreign word before it has been naturalized.
4. Never use a foreign word when there is an equally short and precise English equivalent. *Duet* is better than *duetto*.

(*b*) *Proper Words*

5. Be too alert to use the wrong word because it sounds like the right one, as *demean* for *bemean*.
6. Poetical words, like *erst* and *methinks*, should be confined to lofty and impassioned prose and to satire.
7. Be sure that technical terms—like *sequelæ*, for *consequences*—are used only in technical articles. Be sure that more familiar technical words are perfectly

intelligible from their context.

8. Do not use contractions like *I'll*, except in dialogue or in very familiar prose.

9. Do not use a word twice in two different senses in the same paragraph without making the distinction clear.

Proper Words (Continued)

10. Prefer simple words to those more high-sounding. Do this by not using many words of Latin origin—mingle a few longer words with many short ones.

11. Never use a word out of its accepted meaning unless the context makes your usage clear.

(c) Precise Words

12. Among synonyms, choose the word that expresses exactly your shade of meaning, both in kind and in degree.

13. Avoid general words when specific words will say precisely what you mean.

II. Sentences

Kinds

14. Short sentences should be used for vigor, emphasis, rapid movement, and impassioned discourse.

Kinds (Continued)

15. Too many short sentences produce a disconnected, jerky effect.

16. For detail, smoothness, rhythm, and beauty, use longer sentences.

17. Use care lest long sentences obscure the meaning and slow up the movement.

18. Use balanced sentences to bring out comparison or contrast, as:

> "If the flights of Dryden therefore are higher, Pope continues longer on the wing. If of Dryden's fire the blaze is brighter, of Pope's the heat is more regular and constant. Dryden often surpasses expectation, and Pope never falls below it. Dryden is read with frequent astonishment, and Pope with pertual delight."—JOHNSON'S *Lives of the Poets:* "Pope."

19. To sustain the immediate interest, use periodic sentences—that is, sentences that would be grammatically incomplete if ended before the last words. The following sentence could not be cut without injury:

> "By a curious irony of fate, the places to which we are sent when health deserts us are often singularly

beautiful."—STEVENSON: *Ordered South.*

Kinds (Continued)

20. In easy and informal discourse it is quite right to use a greater number of loose sentences, which might have been ended earlier and yet be grammatically complete. The following example from Stevenson immediately precedes the foregoing periodic sentence:

"Often too, they are places we have visited in former years or seen briefly in passing by, and kept ever afterwards in pious memory; and we please ourselves with the fancy that she shall repeat many vivid and pleasurable sensations and take up again the thread of our enjoyment in the same spirit as we let it fall."

III. ESSENTIAL PROPERTIES OF STYLE

(a) Grammatical Correctness

21. Do not shift tenses, as:

Martha was naturally dismayed. She rises and paces the floor—her whole bearing shows consternation.

22. Do not allow your tenses to be out of harmony, as:

"I never was so long in company with a girl in my life—trying to entertain her—and succeed [succeeded]

so ill."—JANE AUSTEN, *Mansfield Park.*

23. Avoid placing an adverb between the parts of an infinitive. *To sweetly sing* is called a split infinitive.

24. Do not let intervening words, or an inverted order, disturb the agreement of the verb with the subject, as:

"In these expressions *were* shadowed out the whole of that course subsequently developed."—H. L. BULWER, *Historical Characters.*

Grammatical Correctness (Continued)

25. Use *shall* and *will*, *should* and *would*, with care.

26. Use the subjunctive mood when the condition is doubtful, the indicative mood when the condition is regarded as a fact. Note the difference in conditions in these sentences:

If he *be* an imposter why are there no proofs advanced?

If he *is* an imposter you have made him one.

27. Fit verbs to collectives according to the sense and not by rule. *This people is* and *These people are* express different ideas.

28. Do not use *such* as a final pro-

noun, as: *Have nothing to do with such.*

29. When *that* is used properly as a relative it has a closely restrictive sense, whereas the relative *which* introduces an explanatory clause, and when so used is usually preceded by a comma.

I hate personal liberty that means merely license.

I hate personal liberty, which means merely license.

Grammatical Correctness (Continued)

30. Use only a nominative after any predicate form of the verb *to be*, as: *It is I*, not, *It is me; The patriots were they*, not, *The patriots were them.*

31. Use *whom* only as an objective, never as a nominative. Disraeli uses *whom* incorrectly here:

"The younger Harper, whom [who] they agree was nice-looking, etc."

32. Be sure that each group of words you punctuate as a sentence contains, or clearly implies, a predicating verb—a verb which definitely makes a declaration, asks a question, or utters an exclamation. Verb-forms end-

Grammatical Correctness (Continued)

ing in *-ing* (as *singing*), without a supporting verb (like *are*, *were*), are not enough to form the predicate of a sentence.

33. Place adverbs and adverbial modifiers close to the words they modify. Be particularly careful in placing *only*.

34. "Between a word and its modifier do not put anything that can steal the modification."

—GENUNG.

(b) Clearness

35. Let there be no doubt as to which of two or more nouns of like gender and number a personal pronoun relates. This fault is most common in long sentences:

OBSCURE: Jack told his brother that he was a thief.

36. Be sure that all omitted parts of a sentence are clearly implied.

(c) Unity and Coherence

37. During the course of a sentence do not loosely shift the logical subject, but maintain your viewpoint, even in comparing and contrasting. One main thought should dominate each sentence.

Unity and Coherence (Continued)

38. Do not crowd conflicting ideas, or thoughts not naturally related.
39. Rarely attach relative clauses to other clauses which are themselves dependent.
40. A too free use of parenthetical expressions tends to switch thought away from the subject.
41. Rarely attach a supplementary expression to the end of an already complete sentence. Too many loose sentences indicate loose thinking.

IV. Special Properties of Style

(a) Emphasis

42. For emphasis, give a conspicuous place in the sentence to the main idea, using the other parts as a background.
43. Invert the position of the modifier to give it emphasis, as:

    A forehead high-browed and massive.

44. By putting subsidiary matter first, the logical subject will be emphasized (periodic sentence).
45. Repetition of sentence-forms sometimes adds emphasis, but this device should be used sparingly.

Emphasis (Continued)

46. Observe proportion so that the sequence of ideas may lead up to a climax.

(*b*) *Force*

47. Plain, specific, short, and strong words give vigor to sentences.

48. Avoid the repetition of ideas, and the use of unnecessary words—especially connectives.

49. "End with words that deserve distinction."—WENDELL.

50. For weighty force, cut out modifiers, condense clauses and phrases into equivalent words, and choose the most emphatically direct words.

51. Do not depend upon italics and exclamation points to strengthen weak thoughts, weak words and weak arrangement.

(*c*) *Harmony*

52. To secure harmony suit the sound of words to the sense (onomatopoeia).

53. Select synonyms when it is necessary to repeat ideas, but do not lose the shade of meaning.

54. Use alliteration sparingly.

55. Arrange your material with an ear to the prevalence of harmonious sounds when it is read

Harmony (Continued)

aloud, but remember that undue smoothness may destroy force.

(d) Vitality

56. Use direct, idiomatic English, but distinguish between good idioms and time-worn expressions.
57. Be chary in quoting apt phrases—invent your own.
58. Look out for the pitfall of top-lofty or poetic language. Simplicity is best.
59. Rapid movement is gained by suppressing details, using nouns that are so expressive that adjectives are not needed, and inventing epithets to portray characteristic points.

(e) Variety

60. Figures of speech give variety.
61. Used guardedly, circumlocution gives variety.
62. Suggestion relieves the monotony of direct description.
63. It gives variety to have one character describe another instead of using direct description.
64. Do not open several successive sentences in the same grammatical form.

Variety (Continued)

65. Vary declarative and interrogatory with exclamatory forms.
66. Expression may be varied by changing the voice of the verb.
67. Study the inversion produced by introducing sentences with "there" and "it." A free use of this device destroys force.
68. Learn to change from direct to indirect quotation (discourse).
69. Use the historical present very rarely.
70. Learn how to paraphrase poetic into prosaic language, and contrariwise.
71. Practice contracting clauses into phrases and into words; as well as expanding words and phrases into clauses.

(f) *Figures of Speech*

72. Let your figures[1] be short, fresh, striking, and never far-fetched.
73. For condensed and vivid description, use simile, metaphor, allusion, and personification.
74. Interrogation, exclamation, and hyperbole are used for impressive assertion.

[1] *The Art of Versification* gives examples of all the figures of speech.

Figures of Speech (Continued)

75. Apostrophe, and vision (the historical present), are suited to dramatic narration.

76. For illustrations, study the use of figures of comparison.

77. A thing may be affirmed by denying its opposite (litotes):

"A citizen of no mean city.—PAUL.

78. Figures must harmonize with the tone of the composition.

79. Do not mix your comparisons, as:

These temples of legislation, though fruitful of lofty spirits, are defiled by the chaffering of money-mad bargainers.

80. Figures may easily be carried to extremes and used to excess (fine writing).

"The devouring element lapped the quivering spars, the mast, and the sea-shouldering keel of the doomed Mary Jane in one coruscating catastrophe. The sea deeps were incarnadined to an alarming extent by the flames, and to escape from such many plunged headlong in their watery bier."—Quoted by *Andrew Lang*.

V. THE THOUGHT-DIVISIONS

The Relations of the Thoughts

81. Each division of the composition should be dominated by one

main thought, and to that prime thought each subordinate idea should definitely contribute.

82. The unity of each thought-division must be preserved by rigidly excluding everything that does not build it up into a perfect whole.

The Relations of the Thoughts (Continued)

83. The several divisions—whether they be sentences, chapters, sections, or volumes—must follow each other progressively, each growing out of its predecessor and leading to its successor, so that the whole series may be like the steps of a stairway.

84. The transition from one division to another must be smooth, natural and unforced.

VI. The Whole Composition

85. Let your style be determined by the type of the composition.

Entire Effect

86. Do not sacrifice earnestness, individuality, and directness, to gain literary finish; you really need not.

Entire Effect (Continued)

87. Subordinate each part of the composition to the effect of the whole.

APPENDIX B

POINTS FOR SELF-CRITICISM IN FICTION WRITING

1. Is my theme clearly reducible to a single brief expression?

2. Is my theme fresh, or treated from a fresh viewpoint?

3. Is my plot clear, progressive, and natural?

4. Is the complication (main crisis in the struggle) a real one, or does it seem artificial?

5. Is the outcome natural, yet surprising?

6. Is every vital action well motivated, or have I simply forced things to happen to fit my plot without suggesting convincing motives?

7. Have I introduced any useless incidents, delays and digressions?

8. Are there enough twists to keep the plot from being obvious?

9. Are the chief characters brought out prominently?

10. Is the dialogue bright, brisk, natural, suited to the characters?

11. Is the dialogue commonplace?

12. Does every part of the dialogue actually help to develop the story?

13. Are the opening and closing passages well suited to the style of story-telling I have selected?

14. Does the setting actually serve as back-ground for the action, or have I used it chiefly for its own sake?

15. Have I used any needless words?

16. Have I repeated any words when synonyms might better be used?

17. Are my sentences clear and grammatically correct?

18. Have I used a good variety of sentence forms?

19. Does each paragraph stand out as a little composition in itself, leading up to a climax of its own, and does it both naturally follow the preceding paragraph and prepare for the succeeding one?

20. Does the whole story drag at any point, or is the movement consistently rapid?

21. Is the tone of the story harmonious throughout, or does it shift its viewpoint?

22. Is the story well balanced, or is one part sacrificed needlessly to help the other?

23. Is the story long enough to bring out the plot in a well-rounded manner?

24. Is the story short enough to make it compellingly interesting?

25. Does the story leave precisely the impression I designed that it should?

APPENDIX C

Discriminations in the Use of Words

Cautionary Note:— Foreigners who are not well acquainted with English are often led into laughable errors by relying on the dictionary or a book of synonyms. Though in a lesser degree, this is sometimes true also of young writers. It should be remembered that the tendency of dictionary makers is to let down the bars for every new word, or every new meaning for an old word, that has been used either widely or by some one good writer. The results are often painful to a lover of English undefiled. The fact that a word is included in the dictionary as having a certain meaning does not mean that careful writers approve it. This is unfortunate, but true, and there seems no present remedy for the writer but to be not too ready to use new words, or old words in a new sense.

In using any word-book it should be kept in mind also that a dictionary must treat words so briefly that it is impossible to show all the twists of usage which in certain circumstances justify the use of a word in a given sense, but in other circumstances do not. Many words have a secondary meaning, and even several more, *but each such subsidiary meaning is likely to demand a special manner of usage which requires consideration.*

Present good literary usage, then, is based on the origin of the word, its usage in the past by careful writers, what need there may be for an expansion of or change in its

former meaning, and how widely—and wisely—it is used by standard writers today. A safe rule is this: When in doubt, use a word of whose meaning you are certain.

We speak *about* a peddler who carries *around* his pack.

If you write "the *above* paragraph" it may not prove to be higher up on the page. Say *foregoing;* or *preceding,* if the paragraph goes immediately before.

Do not say *above* for *more than*—as "above a thousand people."

We *accept* presents—we do not accept *of* them.

It is pompous to say "He *accepted* a position"—as though in doing so he conferred a favor.

When we have *accomplished* our task we have *attained* success.

An *action* usually consists of a series of *acts*. Use *act* for a single deed.

Contractions like *ad* for advertisement do not belong in good prose.

In good usage, a blow is not *administered,* but *dealt.*

The price of *admission* procures *admittance.*

A thing may be *aggravated*—made worse—only after it has been made bad. Scratching irritates the skin—more scratching aggravates the irritated surface.

Omit *of* in "all of his inheritance."

Never write *alright* for *all right.*

To *allude to* is not to *mention* or *name,* but to refer to indirectly.

One man *alone* is not the same as one man *only.*

An *amateur* is not necessarily a *novice*, who is new to the position.

Amid is poetic; *amidst* is the prose form.

Do not use *and who*, or *and which*, unless the same relative pronoun has been used before in the same sentence.

Prefer more definite connectives to the indiscriminate use of *and*. *But*, *as*, *whereas*, *while*, *then*, *since*, *for*, and *because* are good words.

Antecedents mean things, or events, and not persons, that have gone before.

Having *anticipated* her act, he prevented it. He *expected* a visit.

He was *anxious* about his father's health, so he was *eager* to go to see him.

Do not use *any place* for *anywhere*.

In simple English, *arrival* and *coming* are better than *advent*.

Write *artist* for one skilled in his art, not for an *artisan* trained in his craft.

A man usually is an *aspirant* for office before he becomes a *candidate*.

At length means after a time; *at last* means finally, and suggests that difficulties have been overcome.

An *audience* hears a lecture, the *spectators* see a performance, and a *congregation* gathers for some special purpose, such as at a church service.

Use *author* and *poet* instead of *authoress* and *poetess*.

An *avocation* is a side pursuit; a *vocation* is a regular calling.

If we *avoid* danger we may *avert*—turn aside—accidents.

Aware refers to things external to us; *conscious*, to sensations and thoughts within us.

Balance is a term in accountancy, and not a substitute for *remainder* or *rest*. Do not say "the balance of the day."

Say *between* two, but *among* several.

Say, *burst*, not *bursted*.

Bogus is colloquial for *fraudulent*, or *counterfeit*.

By any manner of means is bad English; *by any means* is good.

Do not say "He is a shoemaker by trade"—*by trade* is superfluous.

Calligraphy means beautiful writing, hence it cannot be bad.

Capacity is a passive quality, *capability* is active. The capable mechanic made a tub of large capacity.

Do not use *caption* for *heading*.

A *casualty* implies accident, hence it is not synonymous with *death*, though a casualty may result in death.

Do not confuse *character* with *reputation*.

A man *claims* that to which he has a real or an alleged right, but he *asserts* that a thing is true.

A *coffin* is not necessarily a *casket*. Undertakers recognize a difference.

To conclude is to come to a decision after consideration, but *to close* is to end.

Condign punishment is deserved punishment—it does not imply *severe*.

Do not say that a marriage was *consummated* when you merely mean that a couple were married.

Continuous means without interruption, whereas *continual* signifies being constantly renewed.

When Congress is *convoked*—called together—for a special session by the President, the members *convene*—come together.

Cortége is more pompous than *procession.*

Credible is worthy of belief; *creditable* is worthy of credit.

Crime is a violation of a statute; *sin* is a violation of a law of God; *vice* is a serious moral wrong.

Deceased is a euphemism for *dead.* It does not really soften an idea to use a high-flown word for a simple one. The same is true of *demise* and *death.*

Strictly, to *decimate* the ranks of an army in battle is to kill or wound one in ten.

The adjective *decisive* means deciding with finality, as "a decisive victory;" *decided* means strong, firm.

Demean signifies to behave; *bemean* means to degrade.

Better not use *depot* for *passenger station*, or *station* for *freight depot.*

Directly refers to a route; *immediately* refers to time.

Dirt is filth, and not necessarily *earth*, *soil*, *gravel*, and the like.

Distinguish between *discomfort* and *discomfit*, which means to defeat utterly.

Divers means sundry, several; *diverse* means different.

Do not speak of an "eminent *divine*"—say *clergyman*, or *minister.* If he is in charge of a church he may be called a *pastor* (shepherd); some churches use the term *rector.*

Do not say *divine service*, but religious service.

Do not confuse *dock* with *pier*, or *wharf.*

Do not *donate*, but *give*—simple words are best.

Each is singular—Each of us *has* his faults.

The *elder* of two brothers; John is *older* than Tom.

"*Elegant* weather" is ridiculous—elegant means refined, polished, nicely discriminating.

Else should not be followed by *but*. "Else than" is proper, "Else that" has a different meaning.

Enthuse is not a recognized verb—it is colloquial.

Water is *essential* to the body because it is a part of its make up—an essence; water is *necessary* to man, because he needs it.

An *event* is a large matter which may include several *incidents*.

Every is singular and quite different in meaning from *all*. Say "Every one *is*"—not *are*.

Evidently means plainly, therefore really; *apparently* means seemingly.

Exceptional is unusual; *Exceptionable* means open to exception or objection.

An *exhibit* is something shown in an *exhibition*.

Use *farther* when you refer to distance, but *further* with the meaning of addition, as "He went farther," "He said further."

A *female* is not necessarily a *woman*.

Feminine applies to mental and spiritual characteristics, *female* to sex.

Fetch means to go and bring—not merely to *bring*.

Write *first*, and not *firstly*, even when followed by *secondly*.

He *fled* from the enemy when he *flew* in his aëroplane.

Confine *former* and *latter* to a group of two only.

One may *found* a church yet not succeed in *establishing* it.

Funds are not *money* in general but moneys set apart in a specific way.

Do not say *funny* when you mean *strange.*

Generally means very widely; *usually* means as a matter of custom or use.

Getting to be is not so good as *becoming.*

Write "*He was graduated,*" not "*He graduated.*"

A *great* man need not be a *big* one—*great* is a badly overworked word.

Do not use *groom* for *bridegroom.*

Wheat is *grown,* potatoes are *raised,* boys are *reared,* and horses are *bred.*

Say "He was *hanged*"—not *hung.*

Do not say "*a healthy ocupation*"—say *wholesome,* or *healthful.*

Henceforth means *from this time on; hereafter* means at some unspecified time in the future.

Write *hillside,* not *side-hill.*

Do not say, "*How ever could you do it?*" but "*How could you ever do it?*"

Hurry implies disorderly effort after *speed.*

One may be *hurt* without being *harmed.*

Do not confuse *idea* with *opinion*—which is formed after consideration.

We may be *ill* without being *sick*—nauseated.

Do not say *illy* for *ill. Ill* is an adverb and needs no finally.

In the charge of does not mean *in charge of.*

To inaugurate implies a much more formal ceremony than *to begin.*

Do not use *individual* as a substantive when you mean merely *man,* or *woman.*

Initial is more pompous than *first.*

Insignificant means *small* only in a derogatory sense.

Gold is virtually *insoluble;* the problem is *unsolvable.*

Integrity rightly applies to the whole character, while *honesty* applies to one phase of it.

Interment is more pompous than *burial.*

Do not say *it would seem* for *it seems.*

She wore the *jewels* she had bought from the shop that sold *jewelry.*

Do not say a *juvenile* when you mean a *child.*

Say *this kind, that kind, these kinds,* or *those kinds*—never *these kind, or those kind.*

Do not say *kind of a* for *kind of.* To say, "This is a new kind of a store" is ridiculous because there can only be one kind of one store.

The late is superfluous in "The widow of the late William Harcourt."

In the expression *later on, on* is redundant.

Use *lay* for placing a thing, and *lie* for reclining.

Better use *lengthwise* than *lengthways.*

Do not write *less* when you mean *fewer—less* refers to quantity, *fewer* to number.

She *let* the boy alone after his brother had *left.*

Prefer *lighted* to *lit.*

Likely refers to any probability, *liable* implies an unpleasant probability.

Do not say "I feel *like* I was going to be sick"—say, "I feel *as if* I were going to be sick."

Do not say *limb*, but definitely *leg*, or *arm*.

Limited does not mean *small*, nor does it mean *inadequate*—though a limited supply may be both small and inadequate; it might be large yet inadequate.

Distinguish *low-priced* from *cheap*.

Lurid means of a ghastly hue, not *bright red*.

Luxuriant means very abundant; *luxurious* means with rich comfort.

Distinguish between *mad* and *angry*.

Do not confuse *majority* with *plurality*.

Do not use *majority* for *most*, as "The majority of people." "The majority of the people" may imply a vote.

Even intelligent people sometimes confuse *marital* with *martial*—sometimes *naturally*, though not *justifiably*.

For the distinction between *masculine* and *male*, see that between *feminine* and *female*.

A *meet* refers to a gathering for sport, while a *meeting* has a general application.

Do not use *most* for *almost*, as, "The flowers are most all gone.

Do not write *murderous* when you mean *deadly*, or *dangerous*—as, "a deadly weapon."

There is such a thing as *mutual friendship*, but not a *mutual friend*, as mutual implies a giving and a taking, and not merely possessing in common.

Negligence is a failure to comply with a rule or custom; *neglect* is a failure to act.

It is a vulgarism to say that the automobile could not *negotiate* the hill.

Negro is good English, *darky* is colloquial.

Nice is as badly overworked a word as *grand*.

Nicely does not mean *well*, but neatly, finely, delicately.

A *noise* is an unpleasantly loud *sound*.

Do not use *nothing like* instead of *not nearly*—"She is nothing like as tall as her sister" is incorrect.

A *part* is a section of the whole; a *portion* is a part of a whole assigned to or taken by someone—as, "He ate his portion."

Use *part* in preference to *rôle*.

Do not use *party* for *person*, or *people*.

Patron is often pompously used for *customer*. A customer gives value for value, while a patron confers favors.

Do not write *people* when you mean merely *family*, or *relatives*.

Do not say, "He earns $3.00 *per* day"—*a* day is good English; *per* is an accountant's term.

Perspicuity means clearness, as of statement; *perspicacity* is the quality of being quick in discernment.

Arsenic is *poisonous*, a rattlesnake is *venomous*.

Do not use *posted* for *informed*.

Practically means in a practical way, actually, really, and is a stronger word than *virtually*. "The contest is virtually over" means that the contest is over in effect, though not in fact.

When you say, "She looks *prettily*" you describe the manner of her gazing—not what you mean. "She looks *pretty*" refers to her appearance. Verbs that signify *doing*

take adverbs, verbs that signify *appearance* take adjectives.

The free use of *preside*—as "presiding at the organ"—is pompous.

Preventative is a corruption of *preventive.*

One who *professes* does not necessarily *pretend*—one may honestly profess his intentions.

A *profession*, like law, or medicine, is not a *business.*

Proof implies more than either *evidence* or *testimony.* Evidence is testimony which has been admitted in evidence by the court. If it adequately supports the point raised, it furnishes proof.

Proportion has reference to form; *dimension* means size.

Proven should be used only in a legal sense—*proved* is the word.

Quite is often misused as a synonym for *moderately*, when it really means *entirely.*

Rarely ever is a corruption of *rarely, if ever.*

Do not use *real* for *really*, or *very.*

Many men *receive* injuries and then *sustain* them badly.

We *recollect* when we recall what has been forgotten; we *remember* only that which is present in memory—*to remember* is an automatic process, *to recollect* is a conscious act.

A *region* is an indefinite term, *section* is definite.

Do not confuse *regular* with *natural.*

Remains is a euphemism for *corpse*, or *body.*

To *remit* means to send or give back; to *send* does not necessarily have this meaning.

A country may *repudiate* a debt, a merchant may *reject*

a claim, a father may *disown* a child, a judge may *deny* a petition, a governor may *refuse* a pardon.

Residence is more pompous than *home*, or *house*; just as *reside* is stilted.

When you write *retire* you do not express the idea of *going to bed*. One may retire by merely going to one's apartments to be alone.

We *retrieve* what was lost, but *redeem* by paying a ransom.

Never use *Reverend* as a proper noun, nor *reverend* as an adjective before a proper noun unless you precede it with either *a* or *the*. It is incorrect to write: "Good morning, Reverend," or "He met Reverend Hollis." It is correct to write: "The Reverend Mr. Hollis," or "The Reverend James Hollis," or "The Reverend Dr. Hollis," or "The Reverend Mother Superior."

It is bad form to say *run a business* when you mean *manage*, or *conduct*.

Omit the final *s* and say *toward, forward, backward, afterward, upward, downward, inward, outward, homeward, earthward, heavenward*.

Do not use *say* when you mean *voice*—"He had no say in the matter."

There is no such word as *second-handed*—say *second-hand*.

In *self-confessed, self* is superfluous.

Sensation is physical, *emotion* is of the soul.

Do not use *settle* for merely *pay*—a settlement ends a matter that has been in dispute. Not all payments are made in settlement.

Sewerage is a system of sewers; *sewage* refers to the contents of the sewers.

"He had no *show*" is colloquial—use *chance*, *opportunity*, *opening*.

To side is colloquial, *to agree* is correct.

Never say *some better* for *somewhat better*.

Specific means definite, *special* means apart from the usual.

To state implies *saying* a thing formally and definitely.

One *stays* at a hotel—he does not *stop* there unless he does not leave the place, or makes a stop there, not as a guest.

Omit *still* from *still continues*.

Not all *students* are *scholars*—learned folk. Neither is a *pupil* necessarily a *scholar*, or even a *student*—one who applies himself to learning.

There is no such verb as *suicided*.

Use *Sunday* when you mean the day of the week. *The Sabbath* is a religious institution. Some regard Saturday as the Sabbath.

Survive is a transitive verb. A man does not merely survive, but survives his comrade, or survives defeat.

Better not say *taken ill* for *became ill*.

A wedding *takes place*, an earthquake *occurs*—the one is planned, the other is not.

Beware of the double *that* in long sentences: "I told him that when he came back to the barn, after having driven Tom to town, *that* (needless) he should let me know."

To *transpire* does not mean *to happen, to occur*, but to leak out, to become known.

Do not say "*he tried the experiment*"— say *he experimented*, or he *made the experiment; try* is implied in *experimented.*

Do not say *try and go*, but *try to go.*

Do not say *two first*, but *first two*—only one can be first.

Say *underhand*, not *underhanded.*

Do not say *very unique*—a thing that is unique is alone in its class—the word cannot be compared.

Unkempt means uncombed—not merely *disorderly*, as of the dress.

Do not write *unwell* for *ill.*

A *vacant* house may not be *empty.*

A thing that is *valuable*—of value—is not always *valued.*

Various kinds is redundant because more than *one* kind implies variety. Say *several kinds.*

Venal is purchasable, mercenary; *venial* is excusable, as "A venial fault."

Verbal—is words—is not necessarily *oral*—by word of mouth.

In "*Philadelphia and its vicinity*"—*its* is needless.

Do not confuse *view-point* with *standpoint.*

Vulgar does not mean *indecent*, but common, coarse, of the mob.

Do not use *ways* for *way*—As, "A long ways from the office."

Do not say *from whence*—whence means from where.

Whip does not mean *defeat.*

With a view to is not the same as *with a view of.*

Without is not a synonym for *unless:* "I will not go without you" is correct; "without you go with me" is not.

To *witness* is to *see* and then to report.

It is usually better to say *woman* than *lady*.

It is colloquial to say that "Mr Wright is *worth* a million"—his fortune is a million, he has a million, etc.

Say, "The fabric is *woven*"—not *wove*.

APPENDIX D

A SHORT READING LIST

A well-equipped public library will contain plenty of books on the craftsmanship of writing which will prove helpful, whereas the private library can usually give room to only a few. The purpose of this short list is to name several standard works in each of the several classes so as to give the writer who consults it some freedom of choice. The list could be largely expanded without lowering the standard of quality.

"The Writer's Library," in which the present work is included, contains treatises on all phases of the writer's craft. A complete list is to be found on one of the front fly leaves of this book.

The Study of Words

Good English, John Louis Haney. Egerton Press, Philadelphia. XI + 244 pp. 75c net[1]. A large number of helpful discriminations in the use of words and expressions.

The Verbalist, Alfred Ayres, D. Appleton & Co., New York. 337 pp. $1.25. Similar to the foregoing, but also containing definitions and examples of figures of speech.

Words and their Uses, Richard Grant White. Houghton Mifflin & Co., Boston. XX + 439 pp. $2.00. A vast deal of scholarly yet readable material on the subject.

[1] "Net" always means postage extra.

ENGLISH GRAMMAR

A Working Grammar of the English Language, James C. Fernald. Funk and Wagnalls, New York. VIII + 333 pp. $1.50 net. A useful work—as untechnical as a grammar can well be.

Connectives of English Speech, James C. Fernald. Funk and Wagnalls, New York. X + 324 pp. $1.50 net. A thorough treatment of prepositions, conjunctions, relative pronouns, relative or conjunctive adverbs, and introductory particles, with many illustrations of their uses.

The Structure of the English Sentence, Lillian G. Kimball. American Book Co., New York. IV + 244 pp. 75c. Clearly explains and illustrates all varieties of sentences.

A Primer of Essentials in Grammar and Rhetoric, Marietta Knight. American Book Co., New York. 64 pp. 25c. A good condensation.

COMPOSITION AND RHETORIC

Talks on Writing English, Arlo Bates. Houghton, Mifflin & Co., Boston. First Series, IV + 322 pp.; Second Series, 254 pp. $1.30 each. Full of inspiring and practical help on all phases of prose writing.

English Composition in Theory and Practice, H. S. Canby and others. Macmillan Co., New York. XVI + 465 pp. $1.25. Every phase of composition admirably taught.

The Working Principles of Rhetoric, John Franklin Genung. Ginn & Co., New York. XIV + 676 pp. $1.40. The fullest and best rhetoric published.

TECHNICAL WRITING

The Theory and Practice of Technical Writing, Samuel Chandler Earle. Macmillan Co., New York. 301 pp., with illustrations. $1.25 net. A notable treatise.

FICTION IN GENERAL

A Study of Prose Fiction, Bliss Perry. Houghton, Mifflin & Co., Boston. VIII + 398 pp., $1.25. An excellent discussion of all phases of the subject.

Materials and Methods of Fiction, Clayton Hamilton. Baker & Taylor Co., New York. XXIII + 228 pp. $1.50 net. Similar in scope to the foregoing, but somewhat less valuable.

THE NOVEL

The Technique of the Novel, Charles F. Horne. Harper Bros., New York. X + 285 pp. $1.50. An admirable discussion of a constructive sort.

THE SHORT-STORY

Short Stories in the Making, Robert Wilson Neal. Oxford University Press, New York. XIV + 269 pp. 60c net. A helpful treatise, with special light thrown on the psychological phases of short-story composition.

Writing the Short-Story, J. Berg Esenwein. Hinds, Hayden and Eldredge, New York. XIV + 441 pp. $1.25. The history, nature, forms, parts, and writing of the short-story, with many illustrative passages.

The Art of Story Writing, J. Berg Esenwein and Mary D. Chambers. Home Correspondence School, Springfield, Mass. XI + 211 pp. $1.35. The anecdote, ancient fable,

modern fable, ancient parable, modern parable, early tale, modern tale, sketch and short-story fully treated, with complete examples of each.

Studying the Short-Story, J. Berg Esenwein. Hinds, Hayden and Eldredge, New York. XXXII + 438 pp. $1.25. Sixteen short-story masterpieces, complete, with very full explanations, biographies and critical and analytical notes.

The Best Short Stories of 1915, Edited by Edward J. O'Brien. Small, Maynard & Co., Boston. IX + 386 pp. $1.50 net. An interesting collection of twenty "best" magazine stories, complete, together with very full tables of comparison, and an index of authors and stories published during 1914—1915.

POETRY

Introduction to Poetry, Raymond M. Alden. Henry Holt & Co., New York. XVI + 371 pp. $1.25 net. Complete and scholarly.

English Verse, Raymond M. Alden. Henry Holt & Co., New York. XIV + 459 pp. $1.25 net. A fine work, giving specimens illustrating the principles and history of versification.

The Art of Versification, J. Berg Esenwein and Mary Eleanor Roberts. Home Correspondence School, Springfield, Mass. XII + 330 pp. $1.62. A complete treatment of the theory of poetry and the art of verse making, including an exhaustive chapter on Light Verse. The new edition contains a chapter on *vers libre*.

DRAMA

Play Making, William Archer. Small, Maynard & Co., Boston. 419 pp. $2.00 net. An interesting and thoughtful discussion.

Writing and Selling a Play, Fanny Cannon. Henry Holt & Co., New York. VI + 321 pp. $1.50 A practical handbook.

The Technique of Play Writing, Charlton Andrews. Home Correspondence School, Springfield, Mass. XXIX + 269 pp. $1.62. A brilliant and authoritative working manual that leaves no ground uncovered.

HUMOR

Laughter, Henri Bergson. Macmillan Co., New York. VI + 200 pp. $1.25 net. The best analysis of the subject.

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